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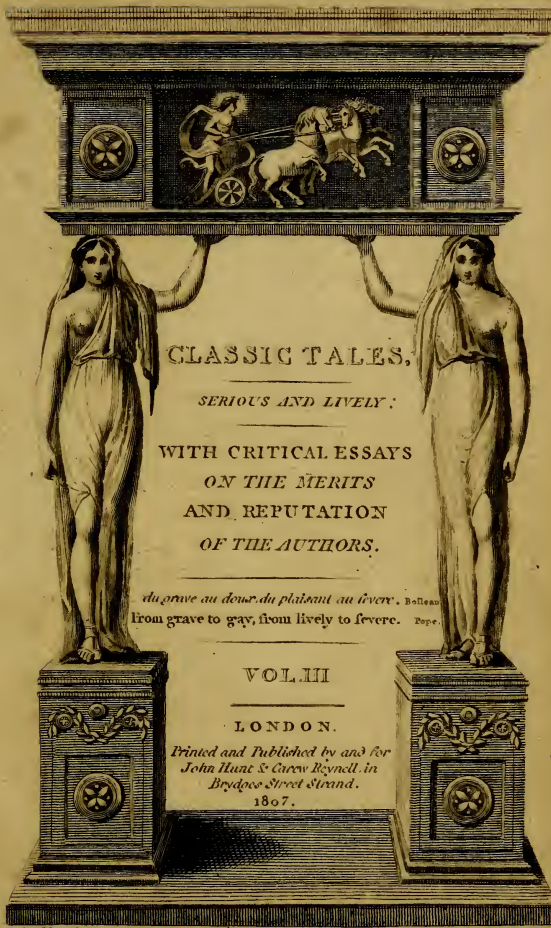

CLASSIC TALES,

SERIOUS AND LIVELY:

WITH CRITICAL ESSAYS
ON THE MERITS
AND REPUTATION
OF THE AUTHORS.

du grave au doux, du plaisant au fevere. Boileau.

From grave to gay, from lively to severe. Pope.

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CLASSIC TALES.

JOHNSON.

ESSAY ON HIS RASSELAS,
BY LEIGH HUNT.

In order to estimate the effect of an author's writings, it would be very desirable to know the motives that took up his pen and the immediate state of mind that influenced it. If the *Night Thoughts* of Young are blackened with unnecessary gloom, it would be as well for the reader to be certain that the Doctor was much of a courtier and began to grow melancholy just as he was disappointed of church-preferment: if the satire of Swift against churchmen and statesmen is apt to prejudice our feelings in his cause, it must be remembered that he also was disappointed of preferment. It is astonishing, with what ease a writer can imagine his own passions to be the general sensation of mankind; and no less astonishing, how easily he will persuade the world to think so

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themselves. The destruction of this fallacy is perhaps the greatest benefit conferred by literary biography, and therefore it is a pity that criticism does not oftener indulge in those little anecdotes of an author's character and life which exhibit the various impressions made on him at different times, and may explain the errors, or partialities, or inconsistencies of his pen. The black and useless melancholy of his *Rasselas* has filled many of JOHNSON'S admirers with astonishment and regret, but they would certainly lose a little of their wonder were they informed of its unhappy though amiable origin, for the author could have regarded life with no very cheerful survey, when he was obliged to exercise his pen in order to defray the expenses of a beloved mother's funeral. Yet however this affliction might have engrossed his heart, it is undoubtedly a pity that it also biassed his judgment: he seems when he took up his pen to have forgotten every thing but his own melancholy and his usual profoundness of style.

Of *Rasselas* indeed, as a novel, nothing can be praised but its picturesque commencement, and even this beauty is unlucky, for it promises the reader more romantic entertainment than he finds. Its great dramatic fault is want of character. Divest his persons of their supposed Abyssinian names, and they have no longer the least shadow

of Abyssinian about them: divest them of names entirely, and one speaker will not be known from the other either by his style or his reasoning: whether it be the Prince *Rasselas*, the sage *Imlac*, the Princess *Nekayah*, or even the maid of honour *Pekuah*, it is still Dr. JOHNSON rolling forth his profound philosophy in a majestic stream of words: thus there is no discrimination of character either national, moral, or sentimental. The author, when young, had translated the Abyssinian voyage of Father LOBO, a Portuguese Jesuit, and this work, which succeeding travellers have called a heap of fables, gave him no doubt his little knowledge of Abyssinian customs: but even LOBO might have taught him the brutality and ignorance of the Abyssinian character, which he has exalted into European elegance and information. The Abyssinian history, like that of Florence, or rather like that of Judea under its monarchy, is nothing but a succession of quarrels and assassinations, of kings throned and dethroned, of courts doing their utmost to tyrannize, and of mobs who were almost an excuse for tyranny. The royal prison, in which the king's sons were always confined till one of them succeeded to the throne, was indeed situated, as JOHNSON tells us, amidst lofty mountains and all the beauties of rurality; but he is mistaken when he makes the royal females the sharers of

their brother's captivity, for they seem to have been almost the only beings in the court who enjoyed its sunshine, their lives exhibit a mixture of private intrigue and gross notoriety, in short they are represented by history as altogether of very different compositions from the chaste and learned Princess *Nekayah*. He is still more mistaken in representing this confinement as a chain of careless and luxurious days, whose only anxiety was the invention of new pleasures: the royal tree, in its most retiring branches, is too great an object to be missed in tempests of state, and the mutilation or death of the confined princes formed the usual melancholy gazette of the changes in government to the inhabitants of the *Happy Valley*. Perhaps it was a kinder policy that fettered the education as well as the liberty of these princes, for knowledge would have done nothing but enlarge their wishes without giving them room for fulfilment; but it is wonderful, how easily JOHNSON has contrived to do away this law against instruction, and to make the inhabitants of a secluded Abyssinian mountain discourse with all the freedom of extensive minds and all the artificial involutions of logic. *Rasselas* always talks as if he had been studying ethics from his infancy, and whether his sister *Nekayah* was confined in the mountain or not, it is much to be questioned if

in a country equally ignorant of the art of logic and the art of computation, she would be familiar with allusions and explications profound as the following:

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to "hear that imputed to falsehood which is the con- "sequence only of frailty (of frailty only). To "the mind as to the eye, it is difficult to compare "with exactness objects vast in their extent and "various in their parts. Where we see or con- "ceive the whole at once, we readily note the "discriminations and decide the preference; but "of two systems, of which neither can be sur- "veyed by any human being in its full compass "of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, "where is the wonder, that judging of the whole "by parts, I am alternately affected by one and "the other, as either presses on my memory or "fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we "differ from each other, when we see only part "of a question, as in the multifarious relations of "politics and morality; but when we perceive "the whole at once, as in numerical computations, "all agree in one judgment and none ever varies "his opinion."

This testy speech of philosophy arises in consequence of some interruption from her brother, while she is haranguing on the disadvantages of

wedlock, a state of which it may be presumed neither the sister nor brother could be a very profound judge, as neither of them had experienced it. The lady's opinions on the subject are much the same as we might expect from an old hard-reading college-doctor, whose fellowship had precluded him from marriage, and therefore made him an enemy to joys which he had no hope of attaining:

"I know not," said the princess, "whether "marriage be more than one of the innumerable "modes of human misery. When I see and "reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, "the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the "diversities of temper, the opposition of opinion, "the rude collisions of contrary desire, where both "are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate "contests of disagreeable virtues, where both are "supported by consciousness of good intention,— "I am sometimes disposed to think with the *severer* "*casuists of most nations*, that marriage is rather "permitted than approved, and that none, but by "the instigation of a passion too much indulged, "entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

It is amusing, after all this virgin philosophy, to reflect on the real opinions and customs of the Abyssinian princesses, who are allowed by law to change their husbands as often as they please, and

who have certainly never shewn the slightest disrespect to its indulgence.

The truth is, that in the composition of his characters and their dialogues, JOHNSON thought less of suiting himself to the speaker than the speaker to himself, and this little production is merely a transcript of his own feelings and sentiments expressed by different persons. He is like a ventriloquist, who throws his voice into the mouths of others, while they express no agreement of appearance with what they seem to utter. The best character in the book, that of the astronomer, who fancied he was obeyed by the sun, was introduced, I have no doubt, to disburthen the mind of the author, who was sometimes overwhelmed with hypochondriacal fancies, but disdaining to interrupt the carelessness of society with complaints, took this method of alleviating himself by a sort of concealed disclosure. In a work indeed which was to represent human life as a heap of wretchedness, this most miserable of all human miseries could not have been omitted; but the strange partiality of a man for his own griefs may be recognized in the minuteness with which he has detailed, through six melancholy chapters, its symptoms, its effects, and its remedy. One cannot imagine without a mingled sensation of awe and pity, the high-spirited, the wise, the virtuous, the immortal JOHNSON, overwhelmed at once with

real and imaginary affliction, and in the full strength of his argumentative powers lamenting the uncertain continuance of reason.

To misfortunes like these, to an author, who had risen, like JOHNSON, through all the climax of literary wretchedness, from daily dependence when a youth to book-making patronage when a man, much melancholy disquisition might be allowed; but a writer should never forget, that his opinions are to influence millions of men and perhaps millions of ages, and that he is almost as culpable in throwing unnecessary gloom over works destined for public improvement, by a continual indulgence of his own feelings, as a mourner would be in carrying his tears and lamentations into every happy company in society.

JOHNSON contemplated nature with discoloured eyes; he saw the world always of one melancholy hue, and could no more pronounce on the comforts of life, than he who looks through green spectacles can estimate the beauty of an Italian sky. He seems to enjoy nothing but the detection of misery: he finds nothing in the breeze but the dust it raises, and nothing in the sunshine but its heat: if every object in short be not an entire or immediate evil, he discovers in it something that contains or at least tends towards wretchedness.

There is nothing therefore to enliven the gloom of *Rasselas*. The author has told us how foolish

we are and how miserable, he has told us of the futility not only of human vice but of human virtue, he has denied the encouragement of honest praise, and undervalued the testimony of a good conscience: in short, he has represented every thing human as a complication of every thing wretched and every thing useless. But if the end of writing be either amusement or instruction, what is there amusing in all this but its fiction; what is there instructive but its exemplification of the errors of melancholy? If we are to be taught, it is by something that shall at least encourage our hopes, if it does not satisfy our wishes; that shall incite us to action, even if activity be our only recompense: but *Rasselas* gives us wretchedness wherever we go and for whatever we do; if it disgusts us with vice, it renders us almost hopeless of virtue; if it dissatisfies us with this life, it does not dwell upon the rewards of a better. This is the despair, not the patience of philosophy.

The great art of wisdom is to estimate things by comparison, so that in every species of choice a man may know what to approve and what to reject. But if it be true, as *Rasselas* would insinuate, that it is impossible to make a choice of life, since all conditions present but one uniform mass of evil, we learn little more than the necessity of a gloomy submission to our destiny and an indifference to what we cannot alter in that of others.

"To me," says the princess in the last chapter but one, "the choice of life is become less im-"portant; I hope hereafter to think only on the "choice of eternity." Now one would rather imagine, that the choice of life was of very important concern to the choice of eternity, and the princess soon afterwards contradicts her own sentiment, and expresses an earnest desire to found a college of learned ladies. This is a true Johnsonian female.

But I could never perceive a single reason why these melancholy philosophers would give us a contempt for this world, even if they had represented the next as our best happiness: I could never perceive, why it was necessary to despise any one gift of heaven in order to deserve the rest. If a monarch sends me a present of gold-dust, with a promise of something infinitely more pure and valuable hereafter, would it become me to neglect the first gift instead of attempting its refinement, and to sit down and mourn till I obtained the second? What then becomes of this idle and impatient philosophy, which waits for heaven with folded arms and a disturbed countenance, which assists nobody, which comforts nobody, which would paralize the lips from smiling and the heart from bounding with affection?

Of pleasure in its highest sense the world certainly does not taste much; our nature is not

made for extremes: but of comfort we have a great portion, and the generality of mankind are without doubt more pleased than discontented with the common condition of life. There is a very plain reason for this; the generality of mankind are busy, they are occupied in pursuits either agreeable, or useful, or necessary, and have no time for the consideration of those evils, which chiefly exist in the consideration only. He alone who sits down to conjecture upon his own misfortunes finds unhappiness so perpetual and universal; his vanity, his estimation of others by himself, his desire to lessen his evil by sharing it with a multitude, every selfish consideration in short strengthens his belief of the general woe, and in order to comfort his own mind, he determines that every body else shall be uncomfortable.

If it be objected, that we hear more of evils than of comforts, that authors in general though disposed to be cheerful are always complaining of the miseries of life, and that common acquaintances talk more of their cares than their comforts, all this is because misfortune is more new to us than happiness: they who are generally at ease with life, feel every little grief an enormous burthen, which they must endeavour to lighten by complaint; they on the contrary, who are continually unfortunate, will be less willing to talk of what is

at the same time so common to themselves and so disagreeable of communication to others. The deepest sorrow, like the deepest stream, is the most silent: little cares, like brooks made by sudden rain, are alike noisy, shallow, and fugitive.

Upon the whole, *Rasselas* may furnish another proof of the error of selecting evils to generalize them; it may convince us how little we can judge of the whole by a part, and how false will be that man's idea of human life, who views it through eyes dimmed with sorrow, who endeavours to decide upon others with a mind ever wandering to himself. In its degraded picture of human being it has been compared with the *Candid* of VOLTAIRE, but I cannot see with what reason, nor do I think the comparison would have been so much attempted, had not the two little books appeared just at the same time. JOHNSON insists upon the universality of evil, VOLTAIRE merely ridicules those who would deny its existence: JOHNSON argues upon the general insufficiency both of virtue and vice in the attainment of comfort, VOLTAIRE exposes the insufficiency of vice, and laments the occasional inability of virtue: the most moral characters in JOHNSON are seemingly the most unhappy, from the very power of reflection; every character in VOLTAIRE is happy or otherwise in proportion as it can bear to reflect: JOHNSON disgusts us with every

thing but his purity of style and of thought, VOLTAIRE with nothing but the deformity of vice, and alas! with his own impurity of description.

For a model of grave and majestic language, considered as the dialect of the author and not of his characters, *Rasselas* will claim perhaps the first place in English composition; nor do I recollect any work of the kind that contains in such a short compass so many profound reflections, and with an occasional reserve as to their generality, so many true ones. But if the end of instruction be the happiness of the community, I would rather gather my conclusions from a writer, who leaves me in a better humour with the world and therefore in a better condition to exert myself for its welfare.

THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS,

PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA.

CHAPTER I.

Description of a palace in a valley.

Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne. The place which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it

could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could, without the help of engines, open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices upon the rocks, and every month dropped fruits from the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or brouse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers shewed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they to whom it was new, always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building stood from century to century deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if Suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage; every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had reposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

The discontent of Rasselas in the Happy Valley.

Here the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the *Happy Valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful; few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance, and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves; all but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him: he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity in his humour made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having fixed his eyes upon the goats that were brousing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself; he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest: I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fullness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy: I long again to be hungry, that I may quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can tell the lutanist and the singer; but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires distinct from sense which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free: I fear pain when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated: surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAPTER III.

The wants of him who wants nothing.

On the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford. "Why," said he, "does

this man thus intrude upon me? Shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to enquire how he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace to loneliness and silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others." "You, Sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the *Happy Valley*. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the Emperor of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply: if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint. If I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite endeavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain,

or lament when the day breaks, and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment shewed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much; give me something to desire."

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness."

CHAPTER IV.

The prince continues to grieve and muse.

At this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life, shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long, or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less re-

gard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be indured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness, either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild

adventures: but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle, that he forgot his real solitude; and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and run forward to seize the plunderer with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts: but, resolving to weary by perseverance him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!"

Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt

a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come, who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country. I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored: I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven. In this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance: I, only, have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that roll-

ed before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind: he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He for a few hours regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the Valley of Happiness.

CHAPTER V.

The prince meditates his escape.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that wish it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature which had never yet been broken, and by the gate through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week after week in clambering

the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he arose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible enquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope

grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAPTER VI.

A dissertation on the art of flying.

Among the artists that had been allured into the Happy Valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel, which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that run through it gave a constant motion: and instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in build-

ing a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion: the workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains; having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to enquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish, than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beast the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied: I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall: no care will be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, Sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth and all its inhabitants rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendant spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts, to survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other."

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains; yet from these preci-

pices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall: therefore I suspect that from any height where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the

naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished, and on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory; he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

The prince finds a man of learning.

The prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the Happy Valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he be-

gan again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer, and with more violence than had been ever known: the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by motive induced

to close his life in the Happy Valley. As he was going to relate his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

The history of Imlac.

The close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and hear, to enquire and answer enquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known or valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Afric and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his do-

minions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand, but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education than such as might qualify me for commerce; and discovering in me great strength of memory, and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father de-

sire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right; but imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence, and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed by successive masters in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors; because, when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce, and opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. This, young man, said he, is the stock with which you must negociate. I began with less than the

fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich: if in four years you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall always be equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

"I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connection with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage; it was sufficient for me that, wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound to Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention.

CHAPTER IX.

The History of Imlac continued.

"When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety; but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and vallies, deserts and cities; it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements, when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing

into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and by my enquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn at the usual expence the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants, and the exactions of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince; "Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shewn by warning as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince; "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied

myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some shewed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high, that the merchants with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and shewed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not for kindness, I would not do for money; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra, till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and

observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike, who live without any settled habitation, whose only wealth is their flocks and herds, and who have yet carried on through all ages an hereditary war with all mankind, though they never covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAPTER X.

Imlac's history continued. A dissertation upon poetry.

"Wherever I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the Angelic Nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that in almost all countries the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent which it received by accident at first; or whether as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for

fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed, that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art: that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca; but I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors. I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing, with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination; he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or

elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety, for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study, and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances: he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features, as recal the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations which one may have remarked and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every

condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name, contemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations, as a being superior to time and place.

"His labour is not yet at an end: he must know many languages and many sciences; and that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarise to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

CHAPTER XI.

Imlac's narrative continued. A hint on pilgrimage.

Imlac now felt the enthusiastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia?"

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in possession of all power and knowledge, whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleets command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained: a thousand arts of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them, is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful; or why, since they can so easily visit Asia and Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiatics and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, Sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations; till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions: it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you that have considered them, tell me the result."

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journies in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without

some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will perhaps find himself mistaken, yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish; we suffer incle-

mencies of weather which they can obviate; they have engines for the dispatch of many laborious works which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniencies: they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers; and if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who have all these conveniencies, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unhappy than we; but they are not happy. Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAPTER XII.

The history of Imlac, continued.

"I am not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude: I would choose my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery

or unkindness. My children should by my care be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received.

"What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power; and why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia, in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose after my travels and fatigues in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living

after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes; for in a city populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions, the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot after a time my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but she rejected my suit, because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitations and repulses,

I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the Happy Valley should open, that I might bid farewel to hope and fear: the day came, my performance was distinguished with favour, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" said Rasselas. "Tell me without reserve, art thou content with thy condition? or, dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit of the emperor, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great Prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest; because I have a mind replete with images which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "or

material possessions; but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another: he that knows himself despised, will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions: they envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the Happy Valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison! thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life.*"

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and perhaps you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests and

boiling with whirlpools; you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince, "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my choice of life."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAPTER XIII.

Rasselas discovers the means of escape.

The prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morrow.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his de-

signs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the *Happy Valley* might be endured with such a companion, and that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanics laughs at strength; I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the coney. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upwards till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to chuse a place proper for their

mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhaused with their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will sometime have an end. Great works are performed not by strength, but perseverance; yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest: if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is

one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

Rasselas and Imlac receive an unexpected visit.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

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RASSELAS.

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The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of shewing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch, lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

The prince and princess leave the valley, and see many wonders.

The prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a

place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down n the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journies, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing that though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a

more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frighted, because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was obliged to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumult of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great

difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

They enter Cairo, and find every man happy.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character and occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers who have no other end of travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your *choice of life.*

They now entered the town stunned by the noise, and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thoughts of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some days continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was

immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money, but the ladies could not for a long time comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life.*

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Whereever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed

with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat a while silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court; I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of an higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of

others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life.*"

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference, must live and die enquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

The prince associates with young men of spirit and gaiety.

Rasselas rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments.

To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest.

The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared a while in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The prince finds a wise and happy man.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were by the open doors invited to enter: he followed the stream

of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He shewed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor of bright, but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; it is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immoveable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which

the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice and misfortune by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being, and waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my guide: I will learn his doctrines and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire the teachers of morality: they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half-darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied,

what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me; of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A glimpse of pastoral life.

He was still eager upon the same enquiry; and having heard of a hermit that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country

with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and enquire whether that felicity, which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man, whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them.

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familia questions, to tell their opinion of their own state: they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous, and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that

could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

The danger of prosperity.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basons, and its stream sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced they heard the sound of music,

and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still further, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princes of the country: but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and

deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAPTER XXI.

The happiness of solitude. The hermit's history.

They came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain overshadowed with palm-trees, at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempest happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have

lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him, and entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended: we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life.*"

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world

full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that enquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not serve myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but,

after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAPTER XXII.

The happiness of a life led according to nature.

Rasselas went often to an assembly of learned men, and who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them; every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them with great vehemence pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labours of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of

the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself to review his life, and purify his heart.

One who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely, that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel and are forced to confess the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to enquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny; not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men

may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide and are happy. Let us therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse: I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard

him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent, and the philosopher supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The prince and his sister divide between them the work of observation.

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further enquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power, and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps com-

mand and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good: or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The prince examines the happiness of high stations.

Rasselas applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since, by the law of subordination, this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents

and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived; the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power," said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the sultan the only happy man in his dominions; or, is the sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAPTER XXV.

The princess pursues her enquiry with more diligence than success.

The princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families, for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good-hu-

mour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied they were in love, when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient: every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear: and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the

occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. "Answer," said she, "great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint?"

"You are then," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts."

"I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest shew of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances; it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest: they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succour them: and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able

to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The princess continues her remarks upon private life.

Nekayah perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions, and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy: in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus, some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and

age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour: but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live only to love less and less: and if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation."

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous: the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another; even the virtuous fall sometimes to va-

riance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it: for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety to the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements, or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without ad-

ding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude: it is not retreat but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we enquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Disquisition upon greatness.

The conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favoured will

think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you, power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet he that sees inferior desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution: he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and, if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are

to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural and almost all political evils are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Rasselas and Nekayah continue their conversation.

"Dear princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing in a familiar disquisition examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

"On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen they must be endured. But it is evident that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negociating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman

drives his plough forward; the necessaries of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us cease to consider what perhaps may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform; each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues, where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am sometimes disposed to think with the severer casuits of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less

happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference; but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder, that judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils of life, the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtilties of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution; will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now enquiring for the world, but for ourselves."

CHAPTER XXIX.

The debate of marriage continued.

"The good of the whole," says Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life, are in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment.

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate

civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children: the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will encrease experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities for inquiry and selection: one advantage, at least, will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children."

"What reason cannot collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those, whose accuracy of remark, and comprehensiveness of knowledge, made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined that it is dan-

gerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other at a time when opinions are fixed, and habits are established; when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible that two travelling through the world under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken: he that attempts to change the course of his own life, very often labours in vain; and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind,

and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair, above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestic day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age, will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation, as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.'"

Those conditions, which flatter hope and attract desire, are so constituted, that, as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but by too much prudence may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAPTER XXX.

Imlac enters, and changes the conversation.

Here Imlac entered, and interrupted them.—"Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you are making the choice of life you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders, and from the wonders which time has spared we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone, or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came not hither to measure fragments of temples or trace choaked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention, and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which can never return, and heroes, whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows?"

"To know any thing," returned the poet, "we must know its effects; to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to enquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy or the evil we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are entrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

"There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern, have understandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye or the imagination is struck with any uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our

own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

"I am willing," said the prince, "to see all that can deserve my search." "And I," said the princess, "shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity."

"The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the pyramids; fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah. "I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest, till I have seen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

They visit the pyramids.

The resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidical form was chosen for a fabric intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he shewed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments, and having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people rude or learned,

among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth: those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavilers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other places, nor why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abyssinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than inclosure in this horrid cavern. You know I dare not disobey you: I must go if you command me; but if I once enter I never shall come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof, and embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramid.

"Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAPTER XXXII.

They enter the pyramid.

Pekuah descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid; they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest a while before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the pyramid no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expence with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagina-

tion which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace by the erection of a pyramid the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone for no purpose laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids, and confess thy folly!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The princess meets with an unexpected misfortune.

They rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their

train, they found every one silent and dejected: the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

"What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the pyramid, said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us: we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away: the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valour? The Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

They return to Cairo without Pekuah.

There was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befal her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place. The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favorite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done

by authority. Governors, being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was dispatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obe-

dience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to Him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connexion of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompence. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault; but, if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably embittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him?

"Consider, princess, what would have been your condition if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had

forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror?"

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAPTER XXXV.

The princess languishes for want of Pekuah.

Nekayah being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recal to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and re-

serve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence; and her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his enquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud by adventitious grief the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us; or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I

am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burthen of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow that what satisfaction this world can afford must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement."

"How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not," replied Imlac, "dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world,

when the image of your companion has left your thoughts." "That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled: yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either; but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye, and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried: the enquiry

after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Pekuah is still remembered. The progress of sorrow.

Nekayah seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favorite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degress she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily

tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from enquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? why should we endeavour to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The princess hears news of Pekuah.

In seven months, one of the messengers who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or

fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in extasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness for her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negociate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Anthony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and, when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither

his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids by easy journies to the place appointed, where receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The adventures of the lady Pekuah.

"At what time, and in what manner I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a shew of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course, and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring shaded with trees in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moon-light to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched, and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I eat it rather to encourage my maids, than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself therefore to be undrest, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting I suppose to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my cloaths, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. "Illustrious lady," said he, "my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princess in my camp." "Sir," answered I, "your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever." "Whoever, or whencesoever you are," returned the Arab, "your dress,

and that of your servants, shew your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction; the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness."

"How little," said I, "did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!"

"Misfortunes," answered the Arab, "should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality."

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him, that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be

expected for a maid of common rank would be paid; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journies. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel; my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked, in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access: for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more

easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The adventures of Pekuah continued.

"We wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whither as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which soothes the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money, and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house built with stone in an

island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. "Lady," said the Arab, "you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security: here are few pleasures, but here is no danger." He then led me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but being soon informed that I was a great lady, detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile, but no such beings ever appeared; and the Arab, when I enquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a

tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening: I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess, "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions: in a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind accustomed to stronger operations could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to

Cairo. They ran from room to room as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed: or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing; for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small, that I could not listen without intercepting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, "whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio

when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority: when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life: as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude; he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind hungry for knowledge be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation."

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense; for, not-

withstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to dispatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house he made many incursions into the neighbouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity; and when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

"He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my com-

panions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah having heard her favourite's relation, rose and embraced her, and Rasselas gave her an hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAPTER XI.

The history of a man of learning.

They returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers of the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motion and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends, once a month, to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas, and fluent conversation, are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him

with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

"His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favourite studies are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance.

"For though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never," says he, "bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded."

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy."

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation: he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the

happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased, and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say; and sometimes when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me.

CHAPTER XLI.

The astronomer discovers the cause of his uneasiness.

"At last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat a while silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: "Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without inte-

grity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee."

"I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested, that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine."

"Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds at my call have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dogstar, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoxial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator?"

CHAPTER XLII.

The opinion of the astronomer is explained and justified.

"I suppose he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

"Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am probably the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or a punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance."

"How long, Sir," said I, "has this great office been in your hands?"

"About ten years ago," said he, "my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"One day, as I was looking on the fields

withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips."

"Might not some other cause," said I, "produce this concurrence? The Nile does not always rise on the same day."

"Do not believe," said he with impatience, "that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false."

"Why, Sir," said I, "do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know to be true?"

"Because," said he, "I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons

of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself."

CHAPTER XXI.

The astronomer leaves Imlac his directions.

"Hear, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat! —Hear me therefore with attention.

"I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries

of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient."

"I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; he dismissed me, pressing my hand." "My heart," said he, "will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun."

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practice his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The dangerous prevalence of imagination.

"Disorders of intellect," answered Imlac, "happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is

in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can controul and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any deprivation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of enquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him, must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, all other intellectual gratifications

are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, Sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine myself the Queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor. I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have in my chamber heard the winds whistle, and the sheep bleat; sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I

play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to image the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour, of my solitude; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," said Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes: when we first form them we know them to be absurd, but familiarise them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

They discourse with an old man.

The evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages.

"Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night, by in-

quiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight

in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recals to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burthened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect with serene humility that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess in a better state that happiness

which here I could find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account, for age had never been considered as the season of felicity; and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy; that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they can confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented: "For nothing," said she, "is more common, than to call our own condition the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age, he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung

upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The princess and Pekuah visit the astronomer.

The princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared that by this artifice no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him; whether on great or little occasions. All

imposture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of greater abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own; and perhaps the distrust, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would be laid aside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company: men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress." "That," said Pekuah, "must be my care: I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it, and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told, that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and

was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity, and when after a short deliberation he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he collected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy? he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy; Pekuah displayed what she knew; he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether

he continued or not in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or enquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you; I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expence of all the common comforts of life: I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students,

they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet and scrupulosity; but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my enquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and in-

stantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am entrusted. If I favour myself in a known error, or am determined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure, as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt: fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain; but when melancholic notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which, from time to time, breaks in upon

you: when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAPTER XLVII.

The prince enters, and brings a new topic.

"All this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrolable and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before, to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me; and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? "Such,"

said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the Happy Valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks, is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with

mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain; and many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless,

The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure in itself harmless may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

"The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by shewing her something which she had not seen before?"

"Your curiosity," said the sage "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were

about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return." "No, I will not be left," answered Pekuah; "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Imlac discourses on the nature of the soul.

"What reason," said the prince, "can be given why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcases which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight, as soon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original of ancient customs," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends; and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories

must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say, that it may be material, who nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said, that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: To which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square,

to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something that he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known, may be over-ruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of Omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use

of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay; whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid than that the pyramid itself was standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indisceptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it

will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shewn by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die: and what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state; they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

The conclusion, in which nothing is concluded.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation

to any excursions, and being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order: she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some invariable state.

The princess thought that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

ANNINGAIT AND AJUT.

(FROM THE RAMBLER.)

Of the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature, and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove. No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of Eng-

land, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country, by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon discover his tranquillity, and while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth, and the severity of the skies in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct, or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages

or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry, yet, however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear, but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested, that "She was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern canibals; that he would tear her from

the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amaroc, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut, might be buried without his bow, and that in the land of souls his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments: but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke, and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the sea-horses on the ice; pursued the seals into the water; and leaped upon the back of the whale, while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes, and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast, before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut, that she would at last grant him her hand, and ac-

company him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait, "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs; then must the night be past without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which lying strangers so wantonly describe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground; dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways enclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer we have no means of crossing the mountains, whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut; a few summer days and a few winter nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gaiety; but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

Painted by R. Hunt. *Engraved by Edward Smith.*

ANNINGAIT AND AJUT.

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The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

Anningait, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale, and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the sea side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud, that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood awhile to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected, laid aside, from that hour, her white deer skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gather moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which

she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the rein deer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women, for a man will not debase himself by work, which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp, or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images, his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life," says he, "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure, but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever? What, love, art thou but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by

imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had yet not called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet? Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity. I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw the whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chace and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in childbirth; and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit

of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four mens and two womens boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five and twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an Angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated Angekkok of that part of the country, and by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise, that when Ajut should consult him, he would declare that her love was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and enquired what events were to befal her, with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The Angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret, and Norngsuk depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue

of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her love might not miss her at his return.

At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, stealing slow and heavy laden along the coast. She ran with all impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land they informed her, that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her; but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing boat, she entered it without hesitation, and telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion,

that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks, and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is, that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

STORY OF MISELLA.

(FROM THE RAMBLER.)

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of those beings, from whom many that melt at the sight of all other misery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to suffer without complaint, and perish without regard; and whom I myself have formerly insulted in the pride of reputation and security of innocence.

I am of a good family, but my father was burthened with more children than he could decently support. A wealthy relation, as he travelled from

London to his country seat, condescending to make him a visit, was touched with compassion of his narrow fortune, and resolved to ease him of part of his charge, by taking the care of a child upon himself. Distress on one side and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondness, and the little family passed in review before him, that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and without knowing for what purpose, I was called to my great cousin, endeavoured to recommend myself by my best courtesy, sung him my prettiest song, told the last story that I had read, and so much endeared myself by my innocence, that he declared his resolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common struggles at the thought of parting, and *some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon.* They considered, not without that false estimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raised to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother sold some of her ornaments to dress me in such a manner as might secure me from contempt at my first arrival; and when she dismissed me, pressed me to her bosom with an embrace that I still feel, gave me some precepts of piety, which, however neglected, I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happiness, of which I have not yet ceased to hope that they will at last be granted.

My sisters envied my new finery, and seemed not much to regret our separation; my father con-

ducted me to the stage-coach with a kind of cheerful tenderness; and in a very short time I was transported to splendid apartments and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to show, noise and gaiety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a blessing on her family with her last breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a sorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore soon ceased to reflect much upon my loss. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom some fortunate adventurers and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I should have shared the encrease of his fortune, and had once a portion assigned me in his will; but my cousin assuring him that all care for me was needless, since he had resolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongst my sisters.

Thus I was thrown upon dependence without resource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated in company, I was no longer to be supported in my former character, but at considerable expence; so that partly lest I should waste money, and partly lest my appearance might draw too many compliments and assiduities, I was insensibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head servant, but that of receiving no wages.

I felt every indignity, but knew that resentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little services and active officiousness, and for a time preserved my-

self from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and studying to please rather than to shine. But my interest, notwithstanding this expedient, hourly declined, and my cousin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and consult me about the alterations of a cast gown.

I was now completely depressed, and though I had seen mankind enough to know the necessity of outward cheerfulness, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might escape from perpetual mortification. At last my schemes and sorrows were interrupted by a sudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occasion when we were left together in a room, to bid me suffer myself no longer to be insulted, but assume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family. He assured me, that his wife's preference of her own daughters should never hurt me; and, accompanying his professions with a purse of gold, ordered me to bespeak a rich suit at the mercer's, and to apply privately to him for money when I wanted it, and insinuate that my other friends supplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this stratagem, which I did not then understand, he filled me with tenderness and gratitude, compelled me to repose on him as my only support, and produced a necessity of private conversation. He often appointed interviews at the house of an acquaintance, and sometimes called on me with a coach, and carried me abroad. My sense of his favour, and the desire of retaining it, disposed me

to unlimited complaisance, and though I saw his kindness grow every day more fond, I did not suffer any suspicion to enter my thoughts. At last the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the submission which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan whom his own promises had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority subdued.

I know not why it should afford subject of exultation, to overpower on any terms the resolution, or surprise the caution of a girl; but of all the boasters that deck themselves in the spoils of innocence and beauty, they surely have the least pretensions to triumph, who submit to owe their success to some casual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of understanding, in their attempts; they cannot please their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their address, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themselves as possessed of any qualities, by which affection is attracted. They surmount no obstacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only those who cannot resist, and are often content to possess the body without any solicitude to gain the heart.

Many of these despicable wretches does my present acquaintance with infamy and wickedness enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery. Reptiles, whom their own servants would have despised, had they not been their servants, and with whom beggary would have disdained intercourse, had she not been allured by

hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns, or shivering in the streets, have been corrupted not by arts of gallantry which stole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence asleep, but by the fear of losing benefits which were never intended, or if incurring resentment which they could not escape; some have been frighted by masters, and some awed by guardians into ruin.

Our crime had its usual consequence, and he soon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was distracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all discovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety, which perhaps none but himself saw in my countenance; but at last mingled his assurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total desertion, if in the moments of perturbation I should suffer his secret to escape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

Thus passed the dismal hours, till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had sent for me to a distant country, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

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Misella now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more power-

fully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

After the distraction, hesitation, and delays, which the timidity of guilt naturally produces, I was removed to lodgings in a distant part of the town, under one of the characters commonly assumed upon such occasions. Here being, by my circumstances, condemned to solitude, I passed most of my hours in bitterness and anguish. The conversation of the people with whom I was placed, was not at all capable of engaging my attention or dispossessing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were such as heightened my abhorrence of myself; for I was not so far abandoned as to sink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondness, but visited me so often, that I was sometimes afraid lest his assiduity should expose him to suspicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore less delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expostulations upon the unreasonableness of my sorrow, and innumerable protestations of everlasting regard, he at last found that I was more affected with the loss of my innocence, than the danger of my fame, and that he might not be disturbed by my remorse, began to lull my conscience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were such as my course of life has since exposed me often to the necessity of hear-

ing, vulgar, empty, and fallacious; yet they at first confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the sincerity of my repentance, without substituting any other support. I listened a while to his impious gabble, but its influence was soon overpowered by natural reason and early education; and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baseness, completed my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempests drive ships upon their coast, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading, and have always thought that wretches thus merciless in their depredations, ought to be destroyed by a general insurrection of all social beings; yet how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who in the agitations of remorse cuts away the anchor of piety, and when he has drawn aside credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return. I had hitherto considered him as a man equally betrayed with myself by the concurrence of appetite and opportunity; but I now saw with horror that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was desirous to fit me to his purpose by complete and radical corruption.

To escape, however, was not yet in my power. I could support the expences of my condition only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was necessary, and, in a few weeks, congratulated me upon my escape from the danger which we had both expected with so much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promise to restore me with my fame uninjured to the world.

He promised me, in general terms, that nothing should be wanting which his power could add to my happiness, but forebore to release me from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my speedy return, and was therefore outrageously impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdness. He told me at last, with an appearance of sorrow, that all hopes of restoration to my former state were for ever precluded; that chance had discovered my secret, and malice divulged it; and that nothing now remained, but to seek a retreat more private, where curiosity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguish, and resentment, which I felt at this account, are not to be expressed. I was in so much dread of reproach and infamy, which he represented as pursuing me with full cry, that I yielded myself implicitly to his disposal, and was removed, with a thousand studied precautions, through by-ways and dark passages, to another house, where I harassed him with perpetual solicitations for a small annuity, that might enable me to live in the country with obscurity and innocence.

This demand he at first evaded with ardent professions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and distrust; and having one day endeavoured to sooth me with uncommon expressions of tenderness, when he found my discontent immoveable, left me with some inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleased that he was at last roused to sensibility, and expecting that at his next visit he would comply with my request,

lived with great tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was so much pleased with this pause of persecution, that I did not reflect how much his absence had exceeded the usual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting subsistence. I then suddenly contracted my expences, but was unwilling to supplicate for assistance. Necessity, however, soon overcame my modesty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no answer. I writ in terms more pressing, but without effect. I then sent an agent to enquire after him, who informed me, that he had quitted his house, and was gone with his family to reside for some time upon his estate in Ireland.

However shocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and, therefore, by the sale of my clothes I supported myself, expecting that every post would bring me relief. Thus I passed seven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and distress, emaciated with discontent, and bewildered with uncertainty. At last, my landlady, after many hints of the necessity of a new lover, took the opportunity of my absence to search my boxes, and missing some of my apparel, seized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

To remonstrate against legal cruelty was vain; to supplicate obdurate brutality was hopeless. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any settled purpose, unacquainted with the usual expedients of misery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had seen me before, and hopeless of relief from those who were strangers to my former condition. Night

came on in the midst of my distraction, and I still continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to shelter myself in a covered passage.

Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean house, and employed my landlady to enquire for a service. My applications were generally rejected for want of a character. At length I was received at a draper's; but when it was known to my mistress that I had only one gown, and that of silk, she was of opinion that I looked like a thief, and without warning, hurried me away. I then tried to support myself by my needle; and by my landlady's recommendation, obtained a little work from a shop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me so much reputation, that I was trusted to make up a head of some value, one of my fellow-lodgers stole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a prosecution.

Thus driven again into the streets, I lived upon the least that could support me, and at night accommodated myself under pent-houses as well as I could. At length I became absolutely pennyless; and having strolled all day without sustenance, was at the close of evening accosted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refused him with hesitation: he seized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring house, where, when he saw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes swelling with tears, he spurned me from him, and bad me cant and whine in some other place; he, for his part, would take care of his pockets.

I still continued to stand in the way, having

scarcely strength to walk further, when another soon addressed me in the same manner. When he saw the same tokens of calamity, he considered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer firmness to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedness, and then abandoned to my former condition, from which I was delivered by another keeper.

In this abject state I have now passed four years, the drudge of extortion and the sport of drunkenness; sometimes the property of one man, and sometimes the common prey of accidental lewdness; at one time tricked up for sale by the mistress of a brothel, at another begging in the streets to be relieved from hunger by wickedness; without any hope in the day but of finding some whom folly or excess may expose to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but such as guilt and terror impress upon me.

If those who pass their days in plenty and security, could visit for an hour the dismal receptacles to which the prostitute retires from her nocturnal excursions, and see the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghastly with famine, nauseous with filth, and noisome with disease; it would not be easy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them against compassion, or to repress the desire which they must immediately feel to rescue such numbers of human beings from a state so dreadful

It is said that in France they annually evacuate their streets, and ship their prostitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infest this city had the same opportunity of escaping

from their miseries, I believe very little force would be necessary; for who among them can dread any change? Many of us indeed are wholly unqualified for any but the most servile employments, and those perhaps would require the care of a magistrate to hinder them from following the same practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the necessity of guilt, and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open prostitution, and where the eye of justice can attend to individuals, those who cannot be made good may be restrained from mischief. For my part, I should exult at the privilege of banishment, and think myself happy in any region that should restore me once again to honesty and peace.

I am, Sir, &c.

MISELLA.

STORY OF ZOSIMA.

(FROM THE RAMBLER.)

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty, with which the life of a man of letters

perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been lately so much impaired by an unsuccessful law-suit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant enquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from

nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions, I waited on Madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. "Are you the young woman," says she, "that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of?" I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—"A great misfortune, indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a day!—So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman, I suppose—such gentlewomen!"—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions; I only answered your enquiry—"Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen."—Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of continuing her insult; but happily the next word was, "Pray, Mrs. Gentlewoman, troop down stairs." You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned, and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Standish I went, and, after having waited six hours, was at last admitted to the top of the stairs, when she came out of her room, with two of her company. There was a smell of punch. "So, young woman, you want a place, whence do you come?"—From the country, Madam.—"Yes, they all come out of the country. And what brought you to town, a bastard? Where do you lodge? At the Seven Dials? What, you never heard of the foundling house? Upon this, they all laughed so obstreperously, that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. "I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff! —You may walk. I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street."

Two days after I went on the same pursuit to Lady Lofty, dressed, as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that showed me in, "Is this

the lady that wants a place? Pray what place wou'd you have Miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now-a-days!"—Madam, I heard you wanted—"Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself! A pretty servant indeed——I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—A servant indeed! —Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house——You are ready dress'd, the taverns will be open."

I went to enquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however. "Are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better"—Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—"Then these are your manners, with your blushes, and your courtsies, to come to me in your worst gown." Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other. "Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming—I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me.—Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk."

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? And upon

my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking hussy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing—"Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again"—At sun-set the first two days I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow; and on the third, that her woman staid.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me; she had known many that had refused places, sell their cloaths, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest, and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routs at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on

as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room in expectation of the common question. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, "Stand facing the light, that one may see you." I changed my place, and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered, and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cried out, "Is that colour your own, child?" "Yes," says the lady, "if she has not robbed the kitchen hearth." This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to enquire what I could do? "But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape:—Well, what are you fit for, Mrs. Mumi? You would find your tongue, I suppose, in the kitchen." "No, no," says Mr. Courtly, "the girl's a good girl yet, but I am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder——Come, child, hold up your head; what? you have stole nothing—" "Not yet," says the lady, "but she hopes to steal your heart quickly."—Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself: "Stole? no—but if I had her, I should watch her; for that downcast eye—Why cannot you look people in the face?" "Steal?" says her husband, "she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribbands, before they were left off by her lady." Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one

from whom you had received no injury? "Insult," says the lady, "are you to come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not jest with a servant? Well, such servants! pray begone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted—a fine time.——Insulted! Get down stairs, you slut, or the footman shall insult you."

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the waggon, to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me, that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid, and perhaps I might do for her; for, like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot, upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for, with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me, that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make

her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story; which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to shew my gratitude better than by giving this account to the Rambler.

ZOSIMA.

VICTORIA, OR THE BEAUTY.

FROM THE RAMBLER.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

You have very lately observed that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds pre-occupied by different objects, any more

than the delight of well disposed colours or harmonious sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or without the help of some female speculatist be able to understand it.

I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage

but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle: she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep, till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and may-dews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to dismiss pimples, and clear discolorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and

triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellencies as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered as necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the manteau-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his

shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to shew that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleasing novelties with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could enquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted

with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement, and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet step with a new French dancing-master, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I had now almost completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of

allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when in the midst of my hopes and schemes I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflexion, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty, and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a cele-

brated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling enquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhausted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleasure and her nights with hope; all

that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies, where I had lately sparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence: But the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practise the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition, to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against

the judgment; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I who had long considered all who approached me as vassals condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation; to catch with eagerness at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependence, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my escape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am yet not without my charms; others have whispered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a wash that would smooth the skin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some soothed me with the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own; and some thought it proper to receive

me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well bred malignity; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day rose upon me without an engagement, and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance. "We must distinguish," said she,

" my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your calamity, a small part is the infliction of heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use: You have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substitute more valuable and more durable excellencies. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

ALMAMOULIN.

FROM THE RAMBLER.

In the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the east, in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages; the sea was covered with his ships; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance; and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physic; they filled his apartments with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed, to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with

promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered with indignation that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends; but his unwillingness to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son; and, dismissing his attendants, "My son," says he, "behold here the weakness and fragility of man; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. Malevolence beheld me, and sighed: His root, she cried, is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate; look upon me, and attend. I have traf ficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain; my house is splendid, my servants are numerous; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country; to have given

seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance; but the hand of death is upon me; a frigorific torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched a while with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborn with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He

showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms, for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion, and disdained him: "How," says she, "dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great."

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters mur-

mured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crowded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, "I have at last found the use of riches; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expence; but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and, in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one

of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason in hopes of sharing his confiscation; yet, unpatronized and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life, and fruitless researches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. "Brother," said the philosopher, "thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayst be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced

and alone. Yet think not riches useless; there are purposes, to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them; they may by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecillity to chearfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of divine favour, and the hope of future rewards."

THE DISAPPOINTED HEIR.

FROM THE RAMBLER.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, may give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I shall therefore forbear the arts by which cor

respondents generally secure admission, for I have too long remarked the power of vanity, to doubt that I shall be read by you with a disposition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illustrate and corroborate your own observations.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose patrimony had been wasted by a long succession of squanderers till he was unable to support any of his children, except his heir, in the hereditary dignity of idleness. Being therefore obliged to employ that part of life in study which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year dispatched to the university, without any rural honours. I had never killed a single woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

At the university I continued to enlarge my acquisitions with little envy of the noisy happiness which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and having obtained my degree, retired to consider at leisure to what profession I should confine that application which had hitherto been dissipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which custom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reasonable, yet to let loose the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniencies of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every side; and mechanics have long ago discovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to rest.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer who had been once the intimate friend

of my father, arrived from the Indies with a large fortune, which he had so much harassed himself in obtaining, that sickness and infirmity left him no other desire than to die in his native country. His wealth easily procured him an invitation to pass his life with us, and being incapable of any amusement but conversation, he necessarily became familiarized to me, whom he found studious and domestic. Pleased with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might increase it, I delighted his curiosity with historical narratives and explications of nature, and gratified his vanity by enquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My brother saw how much I advanced in the favour of our guest, who being without heirs, was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of a traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history, but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This distinction drew upon me

the envy not only of my brother but my father. As no man is willing to believe that he suffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to adulatory compliances or malignant calumnies. To no purpose did I call upon my patron to attest my innocence, for who will believe what he wishes to be false? In the heat of disappointment they forced their inmate by repeated insults to depart from the house, and I was soon by the same treatment obliged to follow him.

He chose his residence in the confines of London, where rest, tranquillity, and medicine, restored him to part of the health which he had lost. I pleased myself with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate possession of wealth which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he, who had thus distinguished me, might hope to end his life without a total frustration of those blessings, which, whatever be their real value, he had sought with so much diligence, and purchased with so many vicissitudes of danger and fatigue.

He indeed left me no reason to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accustom me early to the use of money, and set apart for my expences such a revenue as I had scarcely dared to image. I can yet congratulate myself that fortune has seen her golden cup once tasted without inebriation. Neither my modesty nor prudence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without insolence, and my expence without profusion. Employing the influence which money always confers to the improvement of my understanding, I mingled in parties of gaiety, and in

conferences of learning, appeared in every place where instruction was to be found, and imagined that by ranging through all the diversities of life I had acquainted myself fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I soon discovered how much was wanting to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to Seneca's remark, I had hitherto seen the world but on one side. My patron's confidence in his encrease of strength tempted him to carelessness and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or secret exultation; then preparing to take a legal possession of his fortune, opened his closet, where I found a will, made at his first arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor, and nothing was left me but a legacy sufficient to support me in the prosecution of my studies.

I had not yet found such charms in prosperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injustice, and made haste to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by the preference of kindness, but by the delays of indolence, and cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vultures on their prey, and soon made my disappointment public by the tumult of their claims, and the splendour of their sorrow.

It was now my part to consider how I should repair the disappointment. I could not but triumph in my long list of friends, which comprised almost every name that power or knowledge entitled to

eminence, and in the prospect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment, which I had laid open to myself by the wise use of temporary riches. I believed nothing necessary but that I should continue that acquaintance to which I had been so readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both sides with equal ardour.

Full of these expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my usual circle of morning visits. Where I first stopped I saw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of posture or collection of countenance, that their master was at home, and suffered me to open the inner door without assistance. I found my friend standing, and as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to sit down, but did not stay to be favoured with any further condescensions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a statesman, who received me with an embrace of tenderness, that he might with more decency publish my change of fortune to the sycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy stockjobber, and left me exposed to the scorn of those who had lately courted my notice and solicited my interest.

I was then set down at the door of another, who upon my entrance advised me with great solemnity to think of some settled provision for life. I left him and hurried away to an old friend, who professed himself unsusceptible of any impressions from prosperity or misfortune, and begged that he might see me when he was more at leisure.

At sixty-seven doors at which I knocked in the

first week after my appearance in a mourning dress, I was denied admission at forty-six; was suffered at fourteen to wait in the outer room till business was dispatched; at four was entertained with a few questions about the weather; at one heard the footmen rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed in the flow of casual conversation, how much a man of rank degrades himself by mean company.

My curiosity now led me to try what reception I should find among the ladies, but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleasing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any languor in my imagination, I essayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my sentences were finished. My remarks were now heard with a steady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardness was repressed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I scatter infirmity and disease; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I entreat to sing are troubled with colds; if I propose cards, they are afflicted with the head-ach; if I invite them to the gardens, they cannot bear a crowd.

All this might be endured; but there is a class of mortals who think my understanding impaired with my fortune, exalt themselves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, presume to prescribe my conduct, regulate my economy, and direct my pursuits. Another race, equally impertinent and equally despicable, are

every moment recommending to me an attention to my interest, and think themselves entitled by their superior prudence to reproach me if I speak or move without regard to profit.

Such, Mr. Rambler, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatness and the eye of beauty, gives spirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without understanding, the sport of caprice, the scoff of insolence, the slave of meanness, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

THE SCHOLAR.

FROM THE RAMBLER.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correspondents has presumed to mention with some contempt that presence of attention and easiness of address, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and esteem, yet I cannot be persuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cult*ation; but am inclined to believe that, as we seldom value rightly what we have never known the misery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happiness; and that a natural exuberance of assurance has hindered him from discovering its excellence and use.

This felicity, whether bestowed by constitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can scarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happiness of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of assertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that the splendour of literature would always attract reverence, if not darkened by corruption. I therefore pursued my studies with incessant industry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to consider either as vicious or tending to vice, because I regarded guilt and reproach as inseparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greatest calamity.

At the university, I found no reason for changing my opinion; for though many among my fellow-students took the opportunity of a more remiss discipline to gratify their passions; yet virtue preserved her natural superiority, and those who ventured to neglect, were not suffered to insult her. The ambition of petty accomplishments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was observed to seize commonly on those who either neglected the sciences, or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed in the doctrines of my old master, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

This purity of manners, and intenseness of application, soon extended my renown, and I was applauded by those, whose opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province,

and my relations congratulated themselves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I returned home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticism and philosophy. The wit and the scholar excited curiosity, and my acquaintance was solicited by innumerable invitations. To please will always be the wish of benevolence, to be admired must be the constant aim of ambition; and I therefore considered myself as about to receive the reward of my honest labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

The third day after my arrival I dined at the house of a gentleman who had summoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I set forward with great exultation, and thought myself happy that I had an opportunity of displaying my knowledge to so numerous an assembly. I felt no sense of my own insufficiency, till going up stairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obstreperous merriment. I was however disgusted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company rose at my entrance; but when I saw so many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blasted with a sudden imbecility, I was quelled by some nameless power which I found impossible to be resisted. My sight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harassed by the multitude of eager salutations, and returned the common civilities with hesitation and impropriety; the sense of my own blunders encreased my confusion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to sit down, I was ready to sink under the oppression of surprize; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

The assembly then resumed their places, and I sat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the questions of curiosity, or the appeals of complaisance, I could seldom answer but with negative monosyllables, or professions of ignorance; for the subjects on which they conversed, were such as are seldom discussed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reason of my conciseness, relieved me by some questions about the present state of natural knowledge, and engaged me by an appearance of doubt and opposition in the explication and defence of the Newtonian philosophy.

The consciousness of my own abilities roused me from depression, and long familiarity with my subject enabled me to discourse with ease and volubility; but however I might please myself, I found very little added by my demonstrations to the satisfaction of the company; and my antagonist, who knew the laws of conversation too well to detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteness and comprehension, dismissed the controversy, and resigned me to my former insignificance and perplexity.

After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myself upon an opportunity to escape from the company, whose gaiety began to be tumultuous, and among whom several hints had been dropped of the uselessness of universities, the folly of book-learning, and the awkwardness of scholars. To the ladies therefore I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, insult, and rus-

ticity; but found my heart sink as I approached their apartment, and was again disconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the necessity of encountering so many eyes at once.

When I sat down I considered that something pretty was always said to ladies, and resolved to recover my credit by some elegant observation or graceful compliment. I applied myself to the recollection of all that I had read or heard in praise of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate some classical compliment to the present occasion. I sunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, considered whatever the poets have sung in their praise, and after having borrowed and invented, chosen and rejected a thousand sentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been understood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry, by the servant who distributed the tea.

There are not many situations more incessantly uneasy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to speak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, though he resolves to give a specimen of his abilities, always finds some reason or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was ashamed of silence, yet could find nothing to say of elegance or importance equal to my wishes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themselves not qualified to propose any subject of prattle to a man so famous for dispute, and there was nothing on either side but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of shame, as I was re-assembling my scattered sentiments, and resolving to force my imagination to some sprightly sally, had just

found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I suffered the saucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was scalded, a brocaded petticoat was stained, and the whole assembly was thrown into disorder. I now considered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and while they were consoling and assisting one another, stole away in silence.

The misadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meanest of them that triumphed over me in this state of stupidity and contempt, and feel the same terrors encroaching upon my heart at the sight of those who have once impressed them. Shame, above any other passion, propagates itself. Before those who have seen me confused, I can never appear without new confusion, and the remembrance of the weakness which I formerly discovered, hinders me from acting or speaking with my natural force.

But is this misery, Mr. Rambler, never to cease? have I spent my life in study only to become the sport of the ignorant, and debarred myself from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which must sleep in silence, and form opinions which I must not divulge? Inform me, dear Sir, by what means I may rescue my faculties from these shackles of cowardice, how I may rise to a level with my fellow-beings, recal myself from this languor of involuntary subjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reasoning the liberty of speech.

I am, Sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

MARMONTEL.

ESSAY ON HIS WRITINGS AND GENIUS.

THE course of our selection has now brought us to MARMONTEL, a writer of that peculiar and distinguished talent, that a species of writing, before little known, and not reduced within any certain rules, has been since distinguished by the generic name of "The style of MARMONTEL."

Every writer, like every painter, has a style peculiar to himself; he merits neither the name of the one or the other, if he is content to become the exact copyist of another. But even in the greatest writers, as in the most eminent painters, something of imitation may be discovered by a careful examination; there are few of them so perfectly original, as not to have borrowed something from their predecessors. Some of them have had a very natural and therefore very excusable partiality for their early masters, and others for that particular school, and that certain system, under which they have studied and practised. In the greater part of them, therefore, together with some originality, there has been much imitation; the general outline, perhaps, may have the original impression of a master genius, whilst the detail is

transmitted from one to another in long succession and in close imitation.

MARMONTEL is almost the only writer who is totally exempt from this imputation. He stands at the head of a species of writing, which, before him, had not obtained the form of a distinct style; and, though since daily cultivated, has not been advanced to any higher point of perfection than where he has left it. It stands now at the same degree to which the genius of MARMONTEL has raised it. Many of the individual traits have been indeed mistated, or rather caricatured, but no one has been happy enough to acquire the general talent, and therefore no one has given more than a laborious imitation of the copy before them. As long as they kept strictly to this copy—as long as they have endeavoured as it were to take off a faithful fac simile line by line, and dot by dot, they have succeeded, but whenever they have endeavoured to venture beyond the rule before them, and give a grace of their own, they have as miserably failed.

The style of MARMONTEL is so peculiar to himself, that it is very difficult, except by a long descriptive periphrasis, to convey any suitable idea of it. In its general nature, indeed, it is composed of the constituents of a perfect simplicity—a simplicity of thought—a simplicity of feeling—and a

simplicity of language. But his simplicity is not the simplicity of an English writer. It has no resemblance to that of STERNE, and still less to that of GOLDSMITH. It is the simplicity of MARMONTEL, and of MARMONTEL alone—it is *sui generis.*

Amongst the works of MARMONTEL his reputation almost solely rests upon his *Moral Tales.* He has been indeed the author of many other productions; of some poems, some comedies, and a kind of historical romance under the title of *Belisarius.* It is somewhat singular that his poems are altogether as flat and insipid as his *Moral Tales* are pointed and spirited. He loses himself in the moment in which he attempts to become poetical. His figures are the most wretched common place, and his natural humour is lost in lengthened dilatation. His comedies are little better. He has no success when he steps out of his peculiar circle. He is equal to a scene but not to an act. His *Belisarius* was written for a very base purpose, that of obtaining an entrance into the French academy, by pretending a disbelief of Christianity. The French academicians were accordingly very clamourous and very loud in its praise, but a lively French writer has spoken of it with more justice. "I have read three pages of MARMONTEL'S *Belisarius,* and have done with it. It is

neither history nor romance. It is neither grave nor gay. He thinks of nothing but the French academy, and abuses religion as if he had really never thought of it, assuredly as if he had never read about it. He is worse than VOLTAIRE, because more ignorant. VOLTAIRE deemed it necessary to read in order to abuse; MARMONTEL abuses at random. But this answers his purpose, and that is enough. It will gain him the academy."

It is from the *Moral Tales*, therefore, that we must endeavour to form a due estimate of the genius of MARMONTEL. An examen of these *Moral Tales* will convey a more precise idea of his peculiar style, than can be comprehended in any verbal definition. With respect to the general plan of the *Moral Tales*, they are a species of narrative dramas. They have their fables, and their characters, and their peculiar scenery: the fable is some action of life and manners: the fidelity of the painting to the original in life constitutes its chief excellence. It is this, in fact, which may be termed the peculiar talent of MARMONTEL. He selects for his fable some certain action; something which we see daily passing in the domestic intercourse of life, and with equal judgment and accuracy follows it through all its parts with a representation as exact as lively. His tale is thus a domestic picture, a representation of manners as

seen in the action which he has chosen for his subject.

His *dramatis personæ* are as natural and as domestic as his fable; they are all of a piece, and seem as if taken together and existing only for each other. They are imitated with the same fidelity as the action. He does not take every actor in common, but selects the character which he deems suited to his purpose, and follows it through such of its minutiæ as is pleasing. He possesses above every other writer the peculiar faculty of transmigrating into the person of each of his characters, and of investing himself as it were in the same circumstances. It is by this facility of substitution and general sympathy, that he is enabled so correctly to imitate nature. We have before said that this is his peculiar talent. It is this which constitutes his naïvete.

MARMONTEL is almost as different from every French as from every English writer of the same general style. The reader will better understand this by reference and comparison. Let him compare the tales of MARMONTEL with those of VOLTAIRE: he will find nothing in common but their wit. Both of them are occasionally gay in the extreme, but both of them gay in a very different manner, and in a style peculiar to themselves. VOLTAIRE is occasionally gross and inelegant;

MARMONTEL is never so. VOLTAIRE is sometimes most scandalously obscene; MARMONTEL is never so. VOLTAIRE evidently appears to possess an impure mind, and a fancy which is equally at home in the lowest as in the highest life; MARMONTEL is everywhere the polished gentleman. In high life, elegant and spirited; in middle life, easy; in humble life, simple, innocent, and natural. One can scarcely read his works, and remember his life, without feeling a regret, that a man, who appeared to possess so many excellent qualities, was taken from his proper sphere, and corrupted by the society of Parisian wits. In every point of view MARMONTEL was infinitely more estimable than VOLTAIRE. The latter was a bad man from his entrance into life to his exit: he was still more, he was almost naturally a bad man; he spoiled others rather than being corrupted by them. It was not so with MARMONTEL: it is as evident from his writings as from his life, that he was a man of good natural disposition, but which afterwards became corrupted by the society of Paris.

It cannot, however, be said of all the tales of MARMONTEL, that they are strict imitations of nature. He sometimes falls into a fancied fable and a fancied character, an action and an actor, which never existed in life. It is thus with his *Alcibiades*, a kind of philosophical tale, in which

the hero and the coxcomb, the lover and the philosopher, are very ungracefully mingled together. We have always considered this as the most unpleasing of the collection of his *Moral Tales.* In a word, if MARMONTEL ever fails of pleasing, it is when he becomes a grave coxcomb. He had not a particle about him which was suited to the philosopher, and he never reasons but what he appears to rally.

The *Shepherdess of the Alps* is perhaps the best specimen of the general style of MARMONTEL: it is at once nature and romance. In its kind it is a perfect piece. It has been adopted as the groundwork of an opera in almost every kingdom in Europe: the scenes are beautiful, and the situations impressive: it is an epic romance. It is some years since we have read this tale, but its characters and images are so impressed upon our memory, that we feel no necessity of reverting to the book. This is perhaps the best criterion of excellence: it must be something more than common, which thus once read is always remembered, —which the course of time, and the endless succession of other ideas, has not erased from the mind: it is thus with the *Shepherdess of the Alps.* The reader becomes as enamoured with her as the young marquis himself; he sees her once, and ever afterwards bears her figure in his mind. We speak the more fully upon this tale, as it was the

first which produced the reputation of MARMONTEL. When it appeared in the *Mercure Francois*, the author was anxiously sought out, and taken under the immediate patronage of a prince of the blood. He was, in fact, from that moment admitted into the society of the first wits in France.

Lauretta is the next tale on the scale of excellence. It is not so picturesque, and therefore not so pleasing to the fancy, as the *Shepherdess of the Alps;* but it contains more of life, and more of natural character. *Lauretta*, considering that she is no character at all, a mere peasant girl, is admirably pictured; easy, simple, and interesting; with a good heart and much natural modesty; gradually yielding to seduction, but never abandoned; and retaining our sympathy even in vice itself. Such a character would not be deemed natural in an English writer. The manners are peculiarly French: and there are, or rather there were, some species of French peasantry, who, in delicacy and refinement, were infinitely beyond the English of the same class. The multitude of convents and charitable institutions diffused a decent education through the very lowest classes; and the lands in some parts of France being infinitely subdivided, every peasant was at once a labourer and a proprietor: he had at least a garden and an orchard of his own. The effect of property is wonderful: it raises a man in his own

estimation, and this is a sure and necessary step to his actual elevation. It was well ordained by the antients, with the view of maintaining slavery, that no slave should be able to acquire property. The same observations may be applied to the father of *Lauretta*. Such a character would be very unnatural in an Englishman of the same class, but such characters were frequent in France. They exist even to this day.

It has been very justly observed of the greater part of the tales of MARMONTEL, that he has so strictly observed for them the rules of the drama, that every tale might be distributed as it stands, into a course of scenes and acts; that the fable is already divided, and the *dramatis personæ* already full and distinct. This has been verified, we believe, by the experience of those who have made the observation. FOOTE, KELLY, Miss LEE, and some other authors of inferior reputation, have in fact dramatized the greater part of these tales; and it will be found, upon a comparison of the tales and the dramas, that the former have undergone a very inconsiderable change in passing into the latter. A question here occurs, whence is it, that MARMONTEL has written such insipid dramas himself? The answer may be given in a sentence. MARMONTEL has no talent for lengthened dialogue: he is simple and epigrammatic. This may do in a tale, but is not sufficient for a play.

MARMONTEL even in his tales becomes insipid or heavy, where his dialogue exceeds his ordinary length. Can any thing be more intolerable than his philosophical conversations? It is truly the philosophy of a French marquis, and the humour of a pedant. MARMONTEL, in a word, is never so much at home as in those tales in which there is a mixture of nature and romance; in which the fable is romance, and the characters are in nature. He here appears to write from his own knowledge and from his own feelings. He enters not only into the situations, but into the very characters which he is painting: he acts and speaks, therefore, exactly according to nature—exactly that which the scene and the circumstances would suggest. This picture, presented before the mind of the reader, exactly corresponds with the image, which memory and reflexion has instantaneously impressed upon his mind as the natural original. Hence the lively perception of the fidelity of the picture and the original. The rule of nature, adapted to every mode of circumstances, always exists in our minds, and every thing pleases or disgusts, accordingly as it corresponds with this rule.

It has been objected to MARMONTEL, and it must be confessed with great justice, that the moral is almost the only part of the fable which MARMONTEL seems to have neglected. A tale is certainly

more perfect, which, in addition to its other recommendations, inculcates some maxim of life and lesson of morals. But as long as a considerable part of our lives must necessarily be employed in amusement; as long as it is necessary to divert the attention from graver considerations by alternate relaxation, so long must it never be objected to a writer, that he contributes a large proportion to the general stock of pleasure. It is not necessary that the same writer should both instruct and amuse. These two different departments may very well be distributed between different artificers. It is doubtless an higher merit to instruct than to please; but the writer who can please us, and please us without offending against morals, deserves our gratitude, even though he should not instruct us. We must not expect too much.

It is not, however, altogether true, that MARMONTEL is so wholly negligent of his moral. His purpose indeed is rather a picture of manners than a lesson of duties. He resembles a painter who paints a dog or a horse, a landscape in nature, or a fairy scene of ideal beauty; he has no other aim but to present a good picture, and no one ever thinks of asking him what is the use of it. It is thus with MARMONTEL: he paints a good picture, and does not expect it to be objected to him that it has no utility. Some of the tales, however, are not these mere representations. The *Good Mother*,

Friendship put to the Test, and many others, have an excellent moral which pervades both the fable and the individual characters.

It has been objected to the originality of MARMONTEL, that his tales were written in manifest imitation of those of VOLTAIRE, and that the vein of humour is often evidently borrowed. This is in part true, though not in the degree in which it is asserted. We have before observed, that the manner of MARMONTEL is very distinct from that of VOLTAIRE, and that MARMONTEL is never so pleasing, as when he unaffectedly adheres to his own peculiar style. In wit, properly so called; in the figurative connection of remote ideas; in the indirect conveyance of a grave meaning through light images; sometimes enforcing a moral truth by the ridicule of the opposite falsehood, but not unfrequently attacking truth itself, by producing her amidst unworthy appendages; in this kind of style VOLTAIRE was unequalled; and had his virtue been equal to his wit, he might have reformed as well as have amused his age. MARMONTEL, in his desire of recommending himself to the French academy, and even in some degree to the public, who had formed their taste after the writings of VOLTAIRE, occasionally endeavoured to imitate him in his style, but has never attempted it without a miserable failure. His *Belisarius* will never be read without disgust,

or at least weariness. It is the same with his History of the *Incas of Peru*: he is totally out of his element: it has neither the boldness of romance nor the accuracy of history: it is neither pleasing to the fancy nor to the judgment: it is in simplicity—in that kind of naïvete, where more is meant than meets the ear—in an accurate and lively description of life and character—in the faithful portraiture of a folly or a humour: it is in this that MARMONTEL excels. His tales, as we have before observed, are comedies in narrative. Hence the facility with which they have occasionally been converted into dramas. Nothing has been wanted but the division of the parts to produce them as dramas upon the stage.

The *Sylph Husband* is one of the most curious, but we cannot say that it is one of the most pleasing, of MARMONTEL's acknowledged tales: it is the ridicule of a folly, which approaches too near madness to excite any sympathy: the mind averts from it as incredible. The French, however, are a very lively race, and there doubtless might have been in the days of MARMONTEL a Parisian beauty, who, in one of the reveries of her imagination, might wish for this kind of lover. But, to confess the truth, we have never read this tale with any satisfaction. It has not the recommendation of the brilliant machinery of the *Rape of the Lock*:

it has nothing to compensate for the extravagance of the conception: it is one of the least pleasing of MARMONTEL's tales, though from some unaccountable perversity, it has been sometimes cried up as the most excellent of the whole.

The *Connoisseur* is a tale of a different kind. The characters are interesting, and the fable has much humour. This is accordingly one of the tales which has been imitated and adopted in every language. FOOTE converted it into a play, which had much success at the time. MARMONTEL seems to introduce himself, and to describe his own character in the *Young Provincial Poet*, who had made some pretty verses in the country, and went up to Paris in the expectation of immediate patronage and preferment. In fact, MARMONTEL seems to have introduced himself into more of his tales than this; and no inconsiderable part of their nature and simplicity may be due to this peculiarity. He is sure to paint faithfully who paints from himself. MARMONTEL is thus often the actor in his own dramas.

It has been a question, more curious than useful, who was the author of this style of writing. It seems coeval with the restoration of Learning in the middle of the fourteenth century. The Italian novels are well known: BOCCACIO was the imitator of an older writer, whose works are now lost.

The tales of Boccacio were rather romances than imitations of life and manners. The *Decameron* in Europe was what the *Arabian Nights* were in Asia: the general portraiture and individual images were according to the use of the times, but the connexion of the incidents was perfectly fanciful, and the fable had no existence in life. The *Decameron* of Boccacio, and some of the tales which had been written in Italy by an earlier writer, were eagerly siezed by the poets: Shakespear has dramatized almost all that fell within his reach: Beaumont and Fletcher selected with more discretion, but imitated with equal fidelity: we owe some of the most beautiful of the existing dramas to this fertile mine; the *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* is slightly altered from Boccacio. Such general admiration naturally led to imitation, and a tribe of writers started up, and particularly in France, who deluged the kingdom with their tales. Some of these tales began to assume a voluminous bulk, and were called romances; others were denominated histories, and many still preserved their original name of novels.

This kind of writing had become so prevalent in France in the early part of the life of Voltaire, as almost to supercede every other kind. Nothing was read but novels, tales, romances, and memoirs. Voltaire, therefore, deemed them a suitable

vehicle of his wit and humour: he saw that they would as easily admit of wit and humour, as of insipidity and philosophical absurdity: he saw that the fable might as well be connected, and at least consistent with itself, as it was at that period barbarous and discordant; VOLTAIRE therefore applied himself to writing tales; and VOLTAIRE possessed those mental powers, and that natural and acquired taste, that he could apply himself to nothing without improving it. This species of writing, therefore, under the genius of VOLTAIRE, was refined into meaning, and polished into elegance. Such was its general state when MARMONTEL took it up: MARMONTEL improved upon VOLTAIRE, as VOLTAIRE improved upon others: MARMONTEL threw his eyes upon the great canvass of life, and imitated his fable as well as his characters from their original.

Even MARMONTEL, however, is not altogether pure from errors of the French early novelists. He occasionally imitates their philosophical absurdities, and ridicules follies and humours which had no existence in the time in which he wrote. His *Alcibiades* and *Sylph Lover* are examples of this.

A question will here occur, what English writer has the nearest resemblance of MARMONTEL? This question is the more difficult to be answered, as there is no English writer who has applied him-

self to the same style of writing. There are many, however, who have occasionally contended with him in a single tale.

Of all these GOLDSMITH seems to approach nearest to the general style of MARMONTEL. The *Vicar of Wakefield* is written, as if written after MARMONTEL as its model. The English reader will do well to compare this novel of GOLDSMITH with the history of the *Life of Marmontel*, written by himself, and lately published in England. The similarity of their minds, their sympathies, their early habits, and even of the fortunes of their life, is very striking. MARMONTEL and GOLDSMITH were both born in very humble life, and in very narrow circumstances. Both were thrown upon the world to seek their fortune before they had reached the period of first manhood. The adventures of both were singular, and contributed much to give the tone of their future life and writings. MARMONTEL was thrown into higher society, and eagerly plunged into all its extravagancies; but amidst it all he still retained so much of his natural simplicity and original goodness, that he never becomes totally abandoned. GOLDSMITH in the same manner fell into a society, which, if not equally brilliant, was equally dangerous to his simple morals; and GOLDSMITH in the same manner escaped with the preservation of his excellent

nature. It is impossible, however, to deny, that of the two GOLDSMITH was by far the most estimable man.

MARMONTEL lived to a very advanced age: his last years were rendered uneasy by the excesses of the French revolution: to avoid these, as much as was in his power, he retired to a country retreat, married a young wife, and sought to employ his time in the education of his children. With this purpose he was induced to write the history of his life: these volumes are not the least interesting part of his works.

He had scarcely finished this labour, when he died in the midst of his family. His moral character may be given in a few words. He was a man of many excellent qualities, as simple in his taste of life as in his writings: had he lived in any other times, and in any other nation, his many natural qualities would have rendered him as good a man as he was a writer; but he wanted the force of mind to stand against the constant seduction of bad example, and, therefore, we are sorry to say it, died more innocently than he had lived.

LAURETTA.

It was the festival of the village of Coulange. The Marquis of Clancé, whose seat was at no great distance, was come with his company to see this rural spectacle, and to mingle in the dances of the villagers, as it happens pretty often to those whom disgust chases from the lap of luxury, and who are carried, in despite of themselves, towards pleasures that are pure and simple.

Among the young country girls who gave new life to the joy that reigned there, and who were dancing under the elm, who would not have distinguished Lauretta, by the elegance of her figure, the regularity of her features, and that natural grace which is more touching than beauty? She eclipsed all others who assisted at the festival. Ladies of quality, who piqued themselves on being handsome, could not help owning that they had never seen any thing so ravishing. They called her up to them, and examined her as a painter does a model. "Lift up your eyes, child," said the ladies. "What vivacity, what sweetness, what voluptuousness in her looks! If she did but know what they express! What havoc a skilful coquette would make with those eyes! And that mouth! Can any thing be more fresh? What a vermillion on her lips! How pure an enamel on her teeth! Her face is a little brown and sun burnt; but it is the complexion of health. See how that ivory neck is rounded on those fine

shoulders! How well she would look in a genteel dress! And those little budding charms which Love himself seems to have planted? Well, that is extremely pleasant! On whom is Nature going to lavish her gifts! Where is beauty going to hide herself?—Lauretta, how old are you?"—"I was fifteen last month."—"You are to be married soon without doubt?"—"My father says that there is no hurry."—"And you, Lauretta, have you no sweetheart lurking in your heart?"—"I do not know what a sweetheart is."—"What is there no young man that you wish to have for a husband?"—"I never trouble my head about that: it is my father's business."—"What does your father do?"—"He cultivates his farm."—"Is he rich?"—"No, but he says he is happy if I am discreet."—"And how do you employ yourself?"—"I help my father; I work with him."—"With him! what, do you cultivate the ground?"—"Yes, but the toils of the vineyards are only an amusement to me. To weed, plant vine props, bind the vine-branch to them, to thin the leaves that the grapes may ripen, and to gather them when they are ripe, all that is not very laborious."—"Poor child, I am not surprized that those fine hands are tanned! What pity that she should be born in a low and obscure state!"

Lauretta, who in her village had never excited any thing but envy, was a little surprized at her inspiring pity. As her father had carefully concealed from her whatever might have given her uneasiness, it had never come into her head that she was an object of pity. But on casting her eyes on the dress of those ladies, she saw very well that they were in the right. What difference

between their clothes and hers! What freshness and what beauty in the light silken stuffs which flowed in long folds about them! What delicate shoes! With what grace and elegance their hair was dressed! What new lustre that fine linen, and those ribbands, gave to their half-veiled charms! Indeed, those ladies had not the lively air of health; but could Lauretta imagine that the luxury which dazzled her was the cause of that languor, which rouge itself was not able to disguise? While she was ruminating on all this, the Count de Luzy approaches her and invites her to dance with him. He was young, well dressed, well made, and too seducing for Lauretta.

Though she had not the most delicate taste in dancing, she could not but remark in the nobleness, the justness, and the lightness of the count's movements, a grace which was not to be found in the caperings of the young villagers. She had sometimes felt her hand pressed, but never by a hand so soft. The count in dancing followed her with his eyes. Lauretta found that his looks gave life and soul to the dance; and whether it was that she tried from emulation to give the same grace to her's, or whether the first spark of love communicated itself from her heart to her eyes, they replied to those of the count by the most natural expression of joy and sentiment.

The dance ended, Lauretta went and seated herself at the foot of the elm, and the count at her knees. "Let us not part any more," said he to her, "my pretty dear: I will dance with nobody but you."—"That is doing me a great deal of honour," said she; "but it would make my companions uneasy; and in this village they are apt

to be jealous."—"And well they may, to see you so handsome; and in town they would be the same: it is a misfortune which will follow you every where. Ah, Lauretta, if in Paris, in the midst of those women so vain of beauty which is only artificial, they were to see you appear, all at once, with those natural charms of which you are so unconscious—" "I, Sir, at Paris! alas, what should I do there?"—"Be the delight of all eyes, and make the conquest of all hearts. Hark'e, Lauretta, we have not opportunity to talk together here. But in two words, it depends only on yourself to have, instead of an obscure cottage, and a vineyard to cultivate; it depends only on yourself to have, at Paris, a little palace shining with gold and silk, a table according to your wish, the gayest furniture, the most elegant equipage, gowns for all seasons, and of all colours; in short, every thing which forms the agreeableness of an easy, quiet, and delicious life; without any other care than that of enjoying them, and of loving me as I do you. Think of it at your leisure. To-morrow there is to be a ball at the castle; and all the youth of the village are invited. You will be there, my sweet Lauretta, and tell me if my passion touches you, and whether you will accept my offers. To-day I ask nothing but secresy; secresy the most inviolable. Observe it well: if it escape you, all the happiness which now awaits you will vanish like a dream."

Lauretta thought she had been in a dream. The brilliant lot that had been painted unto her was so far from the humble state to which she was reduced, that a passage so easy, and so rapid, from one to the other, was inconceivable. The hand-

some young man who had made her those offers, had not, however, the air of a deceiver. He had talked to her so seriously! she had seen so much sincerity in his eyes, and in his language.

"I should easily have perceived it," said she, "if he wanted to make a fool of me. And yet, why all this mystery which he has so strongly enjoined me? for making me happy he requires me to love him: nothing more just; but sure he will consent that my father shall partake of his benefits; why then conceal our proceedings from my father? If Lauretta had had the idea of seduction and vice, she would easily have comprehended wherefore Luzy demanded secrecy; but the discretion they had infused into her, went no further than to teach her to decline the rough liberties of the village youths; and in the honest and respectful air of the count, she saw nothing against which she was to be upon her guard.

Wholly taken up with these reflections, her head filled with the image of luxury and abundance, she returns to her humble habitation; every thing there seemed changed. Lauretta, for the first time, was mortified at living under thatch. The plain moveables, which use had before made precious to her, were debased in her eyes; the domestic cares which she had charged herself with, began to be disagreeable: she found no longer the same taste in that bread to which labour gives a relish: and on that fresh straw, where she slept so well, she sighed for gilded roofs and a rich down bed.

It was much worse the next day, when she was obliged to return to labour, and go on a burning hill to support the heat of the day. "At Paris," said she, "I would wake only to enjoy

myself at my ease, without any other care than that of loving, and of pleasing: his honour the count assured me of it. How amiable the count is! Of all the girls in the village he regarded only me; he even quitted the ladies of the castle for a poor country girl. He is not proud, sweet gentleman! And yet he might very well be so! One would have thought that I did him a favour in preferring him to the young fellows of the village; he thanked me for it with looks so tender, an air so humble and touching! and language—what an amiable sweetness in his language!—Though he had talked to the lady of the place, he could not have spoken more genteelly. By good luck I was pretty well dressed; but if he were to see me to-day! What cloaths! what a condition am I in!"

The disgust at her situation only redoubled, during three days of fatigue and heaviness, which she had still to sustain before she could again see the count.

The moment, which they both expected with impatience, arrives. All the youth of the village are assembled at the neighbouring castle: and in a bower of linden trees, the sound of instruments soon gives the signal for the dances. Lauretta advances with her companions, no longer with that deliberate air which she had at the village feast, but with an air modest and timorous. This was to Luzy a new beauty, and she appeared as one of the Graces, timid and decent, instead of a lively and wanton nymph. He distinguished her from the rest in his salute, but without any symptom of correspondence between them. He abstained even from approaching her, and delayed dancing with

her till another had set him the example. This other was the Chevalier de Soligny; who, ever since the village feast, had never ceased talking of Lauretta in a strain of rapture. Luzy imagined him a rival, and anxiously followed him with his eyes; but it was needless for Lauretta to perceive his jealousy, in order to remove it. In dancing with Soligny, her look was vague, her air indifferent, her behaviour cold and negligent. It came to Luzy's turn to dance with her, and he thought he saw, as he saluted her, all her graces animate themselves, all her charms spring up in her countenance. The precious colouring of modesty diffused itself there: a furtive and almost imperceptible smile moved her rosy lips; and the favour of a touching look transported him with joy and love. His first emotion, had they been alone, would have been to fall at Lauretta's feet, to thank her, and to adore her; but he commands his very eyes to restrain the fire of their looks; his hand alone, in pressing that of her whom his heart calls his love, expresses to her by tremblings his transports.

"Beautiful Lauretta," said he to her, after the dance, "remove a little from your companions, I am impatient to know what you have resolved."—"Not to take one step without the consent of my father, and to follow his advice in every thing. If you mean me good, I would have him partake of it; if I follow you, I would have him consent to it."—"Ah! beware of consulting him! it is he, whom above all, I ought to fear. There are formalities among you, previous to love and union, with which my title, my condition, forbid me to

comply. Your father would subject me to them; he would require impossibilities of me; and on my refusal, he would accuse me of having wanted to deceive you. He knows not how much I love you; but you, Lauretta, can you think me capable of doing you an injury?"—"Alas! no; I believe you to be goodness itself. You would be a great hypocrite if you were bad!"—"Dare then to trust me."—"It is not that I distrust you; but I cannot deal mysteriously with my father: I belong to him: I depend on him. If what you propose is proper, he will consent to it."—"He will never consent to it. You will destroy me; you will repent it when too late; and you will be all your life condemned to those vile labours, which to be sure you love, since you dare not abandon them. Ah, Lauretta, are these delicate hands made to cultivate the ground? Must the sun destroy the colours of that beautiful complexion? You, the charm of nature, of all the graces, all the loves! you, Lauretta, will you wear yourself out in an obscure and toilsome life! to be closed in becoming the wife of some rude villager! to grow old, perhaps, in indigence, without having tasted any of those pleasures which ought to follow you perpetually? This is what you prefer to the delights of ease and affluence which I promise you. And on what do you found your resolution? On the fear of giving some moments of uneasiness to your father? Yes, your flight will afflict him; but afterwards, what will be his joy at seeing you rich by my favours, with which he also shall be loaded? What a pleasing violence will you not do him, in obliging him to quit his

cottage, and give himself repose? For, from that time, I shall no longer have his denials to fear: my happiness, yours, and his, will be assured for ever."

Lauretta had a good deal of difficulty to withstand the temptation, but she did withstand it; and but for the fatal accident which at last threw her again into the snare, the mere instinct of innocence would have sufficed to preserve her from it.

In a storm which fell on the village of Coulange, the hail destroyed all the promised vintages and harvests. The desolation was general. During the storm, a thousand mournful cries mingled with the roaring of the winds and claps of thunder; but when the ravage was accomplished, and a light, more dreadful than the darkness which had preceded it, let them see the vine-branches stripped and broken, the ears of corn hanging on their shattered stalks, the fruits of the trees beaten down or blasted, nothing prevailed throughout the desolated country but one vast and doleful silence; the roads were covered with a crowd of unfortunate people, pale, struck with consternation, and immoveable; who, with a melancholy eye contemplating their ruin, bewailed the loss of the year, and saw nothing to come but despair, misery and death. On the thresholds of the cottages, the disconsolate mothers pressed against their bosoms their tender nurslings, exclaiming, with tears in their eyes, "Who will give suck to you if we want bread?"

At the sight of this calamity, the first thought which occurred to Luzy, was the distress of Lau-

retta and her father. Impatient to fly to their relief, he veiled the tender interest he took in their fortunes, under a pretext of common pity to this multitude of wretches. "Let us go to the village," said he to the company; "let us carry consolation thither. It will be but little expence to each of us to save twenty families from the despair into which this disaster has plunged them. We have partaken their joy, let us go and partake of their grief."

These words made an impression on their hearts, already moved by pity. The Marquis de Clancé set the example. He presented himself to the peasants, offered them assistance, promised them relief, and restored them to hope and courage. While tears of gratitude flowed around him, his company, of both sexes, dispersed themselves through the village, entered the straw huts, distributed their gifts, and tasted the rare and sensible delight of seeing themselves adored by a grateful people. In the mean-time, Luzy ran like a madman, seeking the abode of Lauretta. It was shewn him; he flies thither, and sees a countryman sitting at the door, his head inclined on his knees, and covering his face with both his hands, as if he feared to see the light again. This was Lauretta's father. "My friend," said the count to him, "I see you are in consternation; but do not despair: Heaven is just, and there are compassionate hearts among mankind."—"Ah, Sir," replied the villager, lifting up his head, "is it for a man who, after having served his country twenty years, retired covered with wounds, and who has never since ceased to labour without re-

laxation; is it for him to stretch out his hand for charity? Ought not the earth, which is bedewed with my sweat, to give me subsistence? Shall I end my life by begging my bread?" A soul so lofty, and so noble, in an obscure person, astonished the count. "You have served then?" said he. "Yes, Sir, I took up arms under Berwick; I made the campaign of Maurice. My father, before an unfortunate lawsuit had stripped him of his estate, had sufficient to support me in the rank to which I was arrived. But at the same time that I was reduced he was undone. We came here to conceal ourselves; and out of the wreck of his fortune we purchased a little farm, which I cultivated with my own hands. Our former condition is unknown; and this latter, to which I seemed born, gave me no shame. I maintained, and consoled, my father. I married; there was my misfortune; and it is now that I feel it."—"Your father is dead?"—"Alas! yes."—"Your wife?"—"She is happy in not having seen this dismal day."—"Have you a family?"—"I have but one daughter, and the poor girl——Do you not hear sighs? She hides herself, and keeps at a distance from me, that she may not distract my soul." Luzy would fain have rushed into the cottage where Lauretta was mourning, but he restrained himself, for fear of a discovery.

"Here," said he to the latter, giving him his purse; "this assistance is very small; but when you want, remember the Count de Luzy. I live at Paris." On saying these words he went away, without giving Lauretta's father time to return him thanks.

What was the astonishment of the good old Bazil, on finding a considerable sum in the purse! Fifty louis, more than triple the revenue of his little vineyard! "Come hither, my child, cried he, "look at him who goes yonder; it is not a man, it is an angel from Heaven. But I am deceived. It is not possible that he should intend to give me so much. Go, Lauretta, run after him, and let him see that he has committed a mistake." Lauretta flies after Luzy; and, having overtaken him—"My father," said she to him, "cannot believe that you intended to make us so great a present. He sends me to return it to you."—"Ah, Lauretta! is not all that I have at your and your father's disposal? Can I pay him too richly for having given birth to you? Carry back this poor gift; it is only an earnest of my good will; but carefully conceal from him the motive: tell him only that I am too happy in obliging a man of worth." Lauretta was about to return him thanks. "To-morrow," said he to her, "at break of day, as I pass the end of the village, I will receive, if you please, your thanks with your adieus."—"What! do you go away to-morrow."——"Yes, I go away the most passionate lover, and most unhappy of men."—"At break of day? that is about the hour when my father and I go to work."—"Together?"—"No; he goes first; I have the care of the house upon me, and that delays me a little."—"And do you pass my road?"—"I cross it above the village; but, were it necessary to go out of my way, it is certainly the least that I owe you for so many marks of friendship."—"Adieu then, Lauretta, till to-morrow.

Let me see you, though but for a moment: that pleasure will be the last of my life."

Bazil, at Lauretta's return, had no more doubt of Luzy's benefactions. "Ah, the good young man! Ah, excellent heart!" cried he every instant. "However, daughter, let us not neglect what the hail has left us. The less there is of it, the more care we must take of what is left."

Lauretta was so much touched with the count's goodness, so afflicted at being the cause of his unhappiness, that she wept all the night. "Ah, if it were not for my father," said she, "what pleasure should I have had in following him!" The next day she did not put on her holiday-cloaths; but, notwithstanding the extreme symplicity of her dress, she forgot not to mingle in it a little coquetry natural to her age "I shall see him no more: what does it signify whether I am more or less handsome in his eyes? For one moment it is not worth the trouble." On saying these words, she adjusted her cap and her tucker. She bethought her of carrying him some fruit in her breakfast-basket. "He will not despise them," said she: "I will tell him that I have gathered them." And while she ranged the fruit on a bed of vine-leaves, she bedewed them with her tears. Her father was already set out; and with the grey light of the dawn was already mingled that gentle tint of gold and purple diffused by Aurora, when the poor girl, with a distracted heart, arrived alone at the end of the village. The instant after she saw the count's post-coach appear, and at that sight she was troubled. The moment that he saw her, Luzy leaped out of his carriage; and coming towards her with an air of sorrow—"I am pene-

trated, beautiful Lauretta, said he to her, "with the favour which you do me. I have, at least, the consolation to see you sensible of my pain, and I can believe that you are sorry at having made me unhappy."—"I am distressed at it," replied Lauretta, "and would give all the wealth you have bestowed on us, never to have seen you."—"And I, Lauretta, I would give all I have never to quit you as long as I live."——"Alas! I should think it depended only on yourself; my father would refuse you nothing: he loves you, he reveres you."—"Fathers are cruel; they would have us marry; and I cannot marry you: let us think no more of it; we are going to leave each other, to bid an eternal adieu; we who never, if you had been inclined to it, would have ceased to live for one another, to love each other, to enjoy all the gifts which Fortune has bestowed on me, and all those which Love has conferred on you. Ah! you have no conception of the pleasures which awaited us. If you had any idea of them! If you knew what you renounce!"——"Why, without knowing them, I feel them. Be assured, that ever since I have seen you, every thing that is not you, is nothing to me. At first my mind was dazzled with the fine things which you had promised me; but since, all that is vanished: I have thought of it no longer, I have thought only of you. Ah! if my father would agree to it!"—"What occasion for his agreeing to it! Do you wait for his consent to love me! Does not our happiness depend on ourselves? Love, fidelity, Lauretta; these are your titles, and my securities. Are there any more sacred, more inviolable? Ah! believe me, when the heart is bestowed, every thing is over,

and the hand has only to follow it. Give me, then that hand, that I may kiss it a thousand times, that I may bedew it with my tears."—"There it is," said she, weeping. "It is mine," cried he, "this dear hand is mine, I hold it of Love: to take it from me, they must take my life. Yes, Lauretta, I shall die at your feet, if we must part." Lauretta really believed that he would literally die on losing her. "Alas!" said she; "and shall I be the cause?"—"Yes, cruel girl! you will be the cause. You desire my death, you do."—"Oh, Heaven! no: I would lay down my life for you." —"Prove it then," said he, doing her at the same time a kind of violence, "and follow me if you love me."—"No," said she, "I cannot; I cannot without the consent of my father." —"Very well; leave, leave me, then, to my despair." At these words, Lauretta, pale and trembling, her heart pierced with sorrow and fear, dared neither to hold Luzy's hand nor let it go. Her eyes, full of tears, followed with terror the distracted looks of the count. "Deign," said she to him, in order to appease him, "deign to pity me, and to see me without anger. I hoped this testimony of my gratitude would have been agreeable to you; but I dare no longer offer it to you." —"What is it?" said he; "fruit, and for me? Ah, you little tyrant, you insult me! Give me poison!" And throwing down the basket, he retired in a rage.

Lauretta took that emotion for hatred; and her heart, already too much softened, could not support this last attack. Scarce had she strength to get away a few paces, and faint at the foot of a

tree. Luzy, who followed her with his eyes, runs up and finds her bathed with tears, her bosom, choaked with sobs, pale, and almost lifeless. He is distressed; he thinks at first only of recalling her to life; but, soon as he sees her spirits return, he avails himself of her weakness, and before she is well recovered of her swooning, she is already at a great distance from the village, in the count's coach, and in the arms of her ravisher. "Where am I?" said she on opening her eyes. "Ah, my lord count, is it you! Are you carrying me back to the village."——"Dearest half of my soul," said he to her, pressing her against his bosom, "I have lived to see the moment when our adieus almost cost us both our lives. Let us put no more to that trial two hearts too weak to sustain it.

"I resign myself to thee, my dear Lauretta; on thy lips I swear to live for thee alone."—"I ask no better lot," said she to him, "than to live also for you alone. But my father! Shall I leave my father? Has not he a right to dispose of me?"—"Thy father, my Lauretta, shall be loaded with riches; he will partake the happiness of his daughter; we shall be both his children. Depend on my tenderness to ease and console him. Come, let me catch those tears, let me drop my own into thy bosom: they are the tears of joy, the tears of pleasure." The dangerous Luzy mingled with his language all the charms of seduction, and Lauretta was not insensible: while her father, uneasy, afflicted, seeking his daughter, calling her with loud cries, asked after her through the whole village; and not seeing her again in the evening, and retiring distressed, in despair at having lost her, that

image presents itself to his mind, wholly occupies it, and troubles it without ceasing. It was necessary to beguile his grief.

Luzy ran with his horses; the blinds of his carriage were let down; his people were sure and faithful; and Lauretta left behind her no trace of her flight. It was even essential to Luzy to conceal his having carried her off. He detached one of his domestics, who, from a village quite out of the road, contrived to transmit to the Minister of Colangé this billet, in which Luzy had disguised his hand writing:—

"Tell Lauretta's father to be easy; that she is well; and that the lady, who has taken her with her, will have the same care of her as of her own child. In a short time he shall know what is become of her."

This note, which was far from affording consolation to the father, sufficed to palliate the crime of elopement to the daughter. Love had penetrated into her soul; he laid open the avenues of it to pleasure; and from that time the clouds of grief dispersed, the tears dried up, sorrow was appeased, and a transient but profound oblivion of every thing but her lover, suffered her to taste, without remorse, the criminal happiness of being his.

The kind of delirium into which she fell on arriving at Paris, completed the dissipation of her soul. Her house was a fairy palace; every thing in it had the air of enchantment. The bath, the toilet, the supper, the delicious repose which love left her, were so many varied forms which voluptuousness assumed, to seduce her through the medium of her senses. When she waked, she

thought herself still deceived by a dream. When she rose, she saw herself surrounded with women, attentive to serve her, and jealous of pleasing her. She, who had only studied to obey, had only to desire in order to be obeyed. "You are queen here," said her lover, "and I am your principal slave."

Imagine, if possible, the surprize and transport of a young and simple country-girl, at seeing her fine black hair, so negligently tied till that time, the wavy ringlets of which Nature alone had formed, now rounding into curls beneath the ply of art, and rising into a diadem, bespangled with flowers and diamonds; at seeing displayed to her eyes the most gallant ornaments, which seemed to solicit her choice; at seeing, I say, her beauty issue, radiant as from a cloud, and spring up again in the brilliant pannels which environ her, in order to multiply her charms. Nature had lavished on her all her graces; but some of those gifts had need of being cultivated, and the accomplishments came in a crowd to dispute with each other the care of instructing her, and the glory of embellishing her. Luzy possessed and adored his conquest intoxicated with joy and love.

In the mean time, the good Bazil was the most unhappy of fathers. Brave, full of honour, and, above all, jealous of his daughter's reputation, he had sought her, expected her in vain, without publishing his uneasiness; and nobody in the village was made acquainted with his misfortune. The minister came to assure him of it himself by communicating to him the note which he had received. Bazil gave no credit to this note; but, dissembling with the pastor—"My daughter is discreet," said

he to him, "but she is young, simple, and credulous. Some lady has had a mind to take her into her service, and has prevailed on her to prevent my denial. Let us, for fear of scandal, hush up this little imprudence of youth, and leave the people to believe that my daughter quitted me with my own consent. The secret rests with you; spare the daughter and the father." The minister, a prudent and worthy man, promised and kept silence. But Bazil, devoured by chagrin, passed the days and nights in tears. "What is become of her?" said he. "Is it a lady that she has followed? Is there any so mad as to rob a father of his daughter, and to undertake to carry her off? No, no! it is some ravisher who has seduced and ruined her. Ah! if I can discover him, either his blood or mine shall wash out my injury." He went himself to the village from whence they had brought the note. By the minister's information he contrived to discover the person who had been charged with the message: he examined him; but his answers only confused him the more. The very situation of the place served only to mislead him. It was six leagues out of the road which Luzy had taken, and lay quite across the country. But had Bazil even combined the two circumstances of the departure of the count and his daughter's elopement, he would never have suspected so virtuous a young man. As he confided his grief to nobody, nobody could give him any light. He groaned, therefore, within himself, in expectation of some casual gleam to clear up his suspicions. "Oh, Heaven!" said he, "it was in your wrath that you gave her to me! and I, mad as I was,

congratulated myself on seeing her grow up and improve! What formed my pride, now constitutes my shame, Oh, that she had died as soon as she was born!"

Lauretta endeavoured to persuade herself that her father was easy; and the regret of having left him, touched her but faintly. Love, vanity, a taste for pleasures, a taste ever so lively in its birth, the care of cultivating her talents; in short, a thousand amusements, continually varied, divided her life, and filled her soul. Luzy, who loved her to idolatry, and who feared lest he should lose her, exposed her as little as possible in public; but he contrived her all the means which mystery has invented, of being invisible amidst the great world. This was enough for Lauretta: happy in pleasing him whom she loved, she felt not that restless desire, that want of being seen and admired, which alone brings out so many handsome women to our spectacles and gardens. Though Luzy, by the choice of a small circle of amiable men, rendered his suppers amusing, she was taken up at them only with him; and she was able to convince him of it without disobliging any body else. The art of reconciling partiality to good manners, is the secret of delicate souls: coquetry studies it; love knows it without having learned it.

Six months passed away in that union, the sweet intelligence of two hearts filled and ravished with each other without weariness, without uneasiness, without any other jealousy than that which makes us fear that we do not please so much as we love, and which renders us desirous of combining every thing that can captivate a heart.

In this interval, Lauretta's father had twice received news of his daughter, with presents from the lady who had taken her into friendship. It was to the minister that Luzy directed. Remitted to the next post to the village by a faithful servant, the packets came to hand anonymous; Bazil could not tell to whom to send them back; and then his refusals would have created doubts of what he wished to be believed, and he trembled lest the curate should have the same suspicions with himself. 'Alas!" said the good father to himself, "my daughter is perhaps yet virtuous. Appearances accuse her, but they are only appearances; and though my suspicions should be just, I must lament, but I ought not to dishonour my child."

Heaven owed some consolation to the virtue of this worthy father; and it was Heaven, without doubt, which brought about the accident I am going to relate.

The little wine trade which Bazil carried on, obliged him to come to Paris. As he was traversing that immense city, he was stopped in the street by some carriages crossing each other. The voice of a lady in a fright engaged his attention. He sees—He dares not believe his eyes——Lauretta, his daughter, in a gilt-glass chariot, superbly dressed, and crowned with diamonds. Her father would not have known her, if, perceiving him herself, surprize and confusion had not made her shrink back and cover her face. At the movement which she made to hide herself, and still more at the cry which escaped her, he could not doubt but it was she. While the carriages, which were locked together were disengaging, Bazil slips be-

tween the wall and his daughter's chariot, gets up to the step of the chariot door, and, with a severe tone, says to Lauretta, "Where do you live?" Lauretta, seized with fear and trembling, tells him her habitation. "And what name do you go by?"——"Coulange," replied she, looking down, "from the place of my birth."—"Of your birth! Ah, wretch! This evening, at dusk, be at home, and alone." At these words he gets down and pursues his way.

The shock which Lauretta had received was not yet overcome, when she found herself at home.

Luzy supped in the country. She was left to herself at the moment when she had most need of counsel and support. She was going to appear before her father, whom she had betrayed, forsaken, and overwhelmed with grief and shame: her crime then presented itself to her in the most odious form. She began to feel the vileness of her condition. The intoxication of love, the charms of pleasure, had banished the thought; but as soon as the veil was fallen off, she saw herself such as she was in the eyes of the world, and in the eyes of her father. Terrified at the examination and sentence which she was about to undergo; "Wretch!" cried she, melting into tears, "where can I fly? where can I hide me? My father, honesty itself, again finds me, gone astray, abandoned to vice, with a man who is nothing to me! O my father! O terrible judge! how shall I appear before you?" It came more than once into her mind to avoid him, and disappear; but vice had not yet effaced from her soul the holy laws of nature. "I, to reduce him to despair,"

said she, "and after having merited his reproaches, to draw his curse upon me! No, though unworthy the name of his daughter, I revere that sacred name. Though he came to kill me with his own hand, I ought to wait it, and to fall at his feet. But, no; a father is always a father: mine will be touched with my tears. My age, my weakness, the count's love, his favours, all plead for me; and when Luzy shall speak, I shall no longer be so culpable."

She would have been distressed if her people had been witnesses of the humiliating scene which was preparing. By good luck she had given out that she supped with a friend, and her women had made themselves a holiday that evening. It was easy to her to get rid of two footmen who attended her, and when her father arrived, she received him herself.

"Are you alone?"—"Yes, Sir."—He enters with emotion, and after having looked her in the face, in a sorrowful and melancholy silence,—"What business have you here?" said he. Lauretta answered by throwing herself at his feet, and bathing them with tears. "I see," said the father, casting his eyes around him, "in this apartment where every thing bespeaks riches and luxury, I see that vice is at its ease in this town. May I know who has taken care to enrich you in so short a time? and from whom came this furniture, these clothes, that fine equipage in which I saw you!"——Lauretta still replied only by tears and sighs. "Speak to me," said he; "you shall weep afterwards; you will have time enough."

At the recital of her story, of which she disguised nothing, Bazil passed from astonishment to indignation. "Luzy!" said he, "that worthy man! These, then, are the virtues of the great! The base wretch, in giving me his gold, did he think he paid me for my daughter? These proud rich folks think, that the honour of the poor is a thing of no value, and that misery sets itself to sale. He flattered himself with consoling me! He promised you to do it! Unnatural man! how little does he know the soul of the father! No, ever since I lost thee, I have not had one moment without sorrow, not one quarter of an hour of peaceful sleep. By day, the ground which I cultivated was watered with my tears; in the night, while you forgot yourself, while you were losing yourself in guilty pleasures, your father, stretched on his straw, tore his hair and called on you with loud cries. Ah, what? Have my groans never re-echoed to thy soul? Has the image of a father distressed never presented itself to your thought, never troubled your repose?"—"Oh! Heaven is my witness," said she, "that if ever I had thought I had occasioned you so much sorrow, I would have quitted every thing to fly to your arms. I revere you, I love you, I love you more than ever. Alas, what a father have I afflicted! At this very instant, when I expected to find in you an inexorable judge, I hear from your own mouth, only reproaches full of gentleness. Ah, my father! when I fell at your feet, I felt only shame and fear! but now it is with affection that you see me penetrated, and to the tears of repentance are joined those of love!"—"Ah! I revive, I now

find my daughter again," cried Bazil, raising her up.—" Your daughter! Alas," said Lauretta, " she is no longer worthy of you!"—" No, do not discourage thyself. Honour, Lauretta, is, without doubt, a great happiness! innocence a greater still; and if I had the choice, I would rather have seen thee deprived of life. But when innocence and honour are lost, there still remains one inestimable good; virtue, which never perishes, which we never lose without return. We have only to wish for it; it springs up again in the soul; and when we think it extinguished, a single touch of remorse gives birth to it anew. This will console you, daughter, for the loss of your innocence; and if your repentance be sincere, Heaven and your father are appeased. For the rest, nobody in the village knows your adventure; you may appear there again without shame." —" Where, my father?"—" At Coulange, whither I am going to carry you."—These words embarrassed Lauretta. " Haste," continued Bazil, " to strip off those ornaments of vice. Plain linen, a simple boddice, a white petticoat, these are the raiments of thy condition. Leave his envenomed gifts to the wretch who has seduced you, and follow me without delay."

One must have been possessed at this moment of the timid and tender soul of Lauretta; must have loved, like her, a father and a lover; to conceive, to feel the combat which arose in her feeble heart, between love and nature. The trouble and agitation of her spirits kept her immoveable and mute. " Let us go," said the father; " moments are precious."—" Pardon me," cried Lauretta, falling again on her knees before him, " pardon me, my

father; be not offended if I am slow to obey you. You have read the bottom of my soul. Luzy wants the name of husband; but all the rights which the tenderest love can give him, he has over me. I would fly him, detach myself from him, follow you, though to death. But to steal away in his absence, to leave him to believe that I have betrayed him!"—"How, wretch! and what signifies to you the opinion of a vile deceiver? and what are the rights of a passion that has ruined and dishonoured you? You love him! you love your shame then! You prefer his vile favours to the innocence which he has robbed you of! You prefer to your father the most cruel of your enemies! You dare not fly him in his absence, and quit him without his consent! Ah, when you were to quit your father, to overwhelm him, to drive him to destruction, you were not then so timorous! And what do you expect from your ravisher? That he should defend you? That he should withdraw you from paternal authority? Oh, let him come! let him dare to drive me hence; I am alone, unarmed, enfeebled by age; but they shall see me extended on the threshold of your door, calling for vengeance to God and man. Your lover, himself, in order to get at thee, shall march over my body; and passers by shall say with horror, 'There is the father whom she disavows, and whom her lover tramples under his feet!'

"Ah! my father," said Lauretta, terrified at this image, "how little do you know the man whom you rail against so cruelly! Nothing is gentler, nothing more sensible. You will be to him respectable and sacred." "Dare you to talk to me

of the respect of one who dishonours me? Dost thou hope that he may seduce me with his perfidious gentleness? I will not see him; if you can answer for him, I cannot answer for myself?"—"Well do not see him, but permit me to see him, but for a moment."—"What do you ask? me to leave you alone with him! Ah! though he should take away my life, I would not shew him that complaisance. While he was able to keep you from me, it was his crime, it was thine, I was not answerable for it. But Heaven now puts you again under my guard, and from this moment I answer to Heaven for thee. Let us go, daughter, it is already dark; this is the instant for us to depart! Resolve; renounce thy father or obey."—"You pierce my heart!"—"Obey, I tell thee, or dread my curse!" At these terrible words, the trembling Lauretta had no strength to reply. She undresses herself before her father's eyes, and puts on, not without a flood of tears, the plain dress which he had prescribed to her. "My father," said she to him at the moment she was preparing to follow him, "dare I ask, at the price of my obedience, one single favour? You do not wish the death of him whom I sacrifice to you. Suffer me to write him two words, to inform him it is you that I obey, and that you oblige me to follow you."—"What! that he may come and carry you off again, to steal you from me? No, I will leave no trace of you. Let him die of shame, he will do justice upon himself; but of love, never fear that; libertines never die of it." Then, taking his daughter by the hand, he carried her out without noise, and the next morning,

embarking on the Seine, they returned into their own country.

At midnight the count arrives at his own house, where he flatters himself pleasure awaits him, and finds all there in alarm and confusion.

Lauretta's people tell him with fright that they do not know what is become of her; that they have sought her in vain; that she had taken care to send them out of the way, and had seized that moment to elude their vigilance; that she did not sup at her friend's; and that on going off she had left every thing behind her, even to her diamonds, and the gown she had worn that day.

"We must wait for her," said Luzy after a long silence. "Do not go to bed; there is something incomprehensible in this affair."

Love, which seeks to flatter itself, began by conjectures to excuse Lauretta; but finding them all destitute of probability, he delivered himself up to the most cruel suspicions. "An involuntary accident might have detained her; but in the absence of her people to undress herself; to make her escape alone, at dusk! to leave her house in uneasiness! all this," said he, "clearly shews a premeditated flight. Has Heaven touched her? Is it remorse that has determined her to fly me! Ah, why can I not least believe it! but if she had taken an honest part, she would have had pity on me; she would have written to me, though it were but two words, of consolation and adieu. Her letter would not have betrayed her; and would have spared me suspicions, grievous to me, and dishonourable to her. Lauretta! O Heaven! candour itself, innocence, truth! Lauretta unfaith-

ful and perfidious! she, who but this very morning——No, no, it is incredible; and yet it is but too true." Every moment, every reflection, seemed a new proof; but hope and confidence could not quit his heart. He struggled against persuasion, as an expiring man against death. "If she were to return," said he; "if she were to return innocent and faithful! Ah, would my fortune, my life, all my love, be sufficient to repair the injury I do her! What pleasure should I have in confessing myself in fault! With what transports, with what tears, would I efface the crime of having accused her! Alas, I dare not flatter myself with being unjust: I am not so happy!

There is nobody who, in the uneasiness and ardour of expectation, has not sometimes experienced at Paris the torment of listening to the noise of the coaches, each of which we take for that which we expect, and each of which by turns arrives, and carries away, as it passes, the hopes which it had just excited. The unhappy Luzy was till three in the morning in this cruel perplexity. Every carriage which he heard was, perhaps, that which was bringing back Lauretta; at last hope, so often deceived, gave place to despair. "I am betrayed," said he; "I can no longer doubt it. It is a plot which has been concealed from me. The caresses of the perfidious creature served only the better to disguise it. They have artfully chosen the day on which I was to sup in the country. She has left every thing behind her, to let me understand that he has no further occasion for my presents. Another, without doubt, overwhelms her with them. She would have been ashamed to have any thing of mine.

The most feeble pledge of my love would have been a perpetual reproach of her treachery and ingratitude. She would forget me, in order to deliver herself up in peace to the man she prefers. Ah, the perjured wretch! does she hope to find any one who loves her like me? I loved her too well, I gave myself too much up to it. Her desires, by being perpetually prevented, became extinct. These are the ways of women. They grow tired of every thing, even of being happy. Ah, canst thou be so now, perfidious girl! Canst thou be so, and think of me? Of me, do I say! What signify to her my love and grief? Ah, while I can scarce restrain my cries, while I bathe her bed with my tears, another, perhaps——Horrible thought! I cannot support it. I will know this rival, and if the fire which burns in my breast has not consumed me before day, I will not die without vengeance. It is doubtless some one of those false friends whom I have imprudently introduced to her. Soligny, perhaps. He was taken with her when we saw her in her own village. She was simple and sincere then. How is she changed! He wanted to see her again; and I, poor easy fool! thinking myself beloved, believing it impossible for Lauretta to be unfaithful, brought my rival to her. I may be deceived, but, in short, it is he whom I suspect. I will be satisfied instantly. "Follow me," said he to one of his domestics; and it was scarce day-light, when, knocking at the chevalier's door, Luzy asked to see him.—"He is not at home, Sir," said the Swiss.—"Not at home?"—"No, Sir, he is in the country."—"How long since?"—"Since yesterday evening."—"At what hour?"—"About

dusk."—"And what part of the country is he gone to?"—"We do not know: he has taken only his valet de chambre with him."—"In what carriage?"—"In his vis-a-vis."—"Is his absence to be long?"—"He will not be back this fortnight, and has ordered me to take care of his letters."—"At his return tell him that I was here, and that I desired to see him."

"At last," said he, on going away, "I am convinced. Every thing agrees. Nothing remains but to discover where they have concealed themselves. I will tear her from his arms, the perfidious wretch! and I will have the pleasure of washing away with his blood my injury and her treachery!"

His researches were ineffectual. The chevalier's journey was a mystery which he could not penetrate. Luzy was, therefore, fifteen days on the rack; and the full persuasion that Soligny was the ravisher, diverted him from every other idea."

In his impatience he sent every morning to know if his rival was returned. At last he was told that he was just arrived. He flies to him, enflamed with anger, and the favourable reception given him by the chevalier only irritated him more. "My dear count," said Soligny, "you have been very earnest in your enquiries for me; how can I serve you?"—"In ridding me," replied Luzy, at the same time turning pale, "either of a life which I detest, or of a rival whom I hate. You have carried off my mistress; nothing remains but to pluck out my heart."—"My friend," said the chevalier to him, "I have as great a de-

sire to have my throat cut as yourself, for I am quite mad with vexation; but I have no quarrel with you; if you please let us understand each other. Lauretta has been carried off you say; I am very sorry for it; she was a charming girl; but, upon my honour, it was not by me! Not that I pique myself on any delicacy in that point. In love I forgive my own friends, and allow myself these little petit-larcenies, and though I heartily love you, yet if Lauretta had thought proper to deceive you for me, rather than for another, I should not have been cruel. But as to carrying them off, I don't like that, that is too serious a business for me; and if you have no other reason for killing me, I advise you to let me live, and to breakfast with me." Though the chevalier's language had very much the air of frankness, Luzy still retained his suspicions. "You disappeared," said he, "the same evening, at the same hour; and you lay hid for a fortnight; I know besides that you loved her, and that you had an inclination for her at the very time that I took her."

"You are in luck," said Soligny, "that in the humour I am now in, I love you enough to come to an explanation. Lauretta went off the same evening with me; I have nothing to say to that: it is one of these critical rencounters which form the intrigue of romances. I thought Lauretta beautiful as an angel, and I had an inclination for her, it is true; but if you will cut the throats of all who are guilty of the same crime, mercy upon one half of Paris! The important article then is the secret of my journey and absence. Very well, I well explain that matter.

"I was in love with Madam de Blanson, or rather, I was in love with her riches, her birth, her credit at court; for that woman has every thing in her favour except herself. You know, that if she is neither young nor handsome, to make amends, she has a deal of sensibility, and is easily set on fire. I had got into her good graces, and saw no possibility to be, as it is called, happy, without proceeding to marriage. But marriage was my point; and under cover of that respectful timidity, inseparable from a delicate love, I eluded all opportunity of making an ill use of her weakness. So much reserve disconcerted her. She never saw, she said, a man so timorous, and so much of the novice. I was as bashful as a young girl: my modesty absolutely tantalized her. In short, not to trouble you with all the arts I employed for three months to sustain attacks without surrendering, never did coquette strive so much to kindle ineffectual desires. My conduct was a masterpiece of prudence and dexterity: but the widow was too hard for me. I am her dupe: yes, my friend, she has surprised my credulous innocence. Seeing that she must attack me regularly, she talked of marriage. Nothing was more advantageous than her proposals. Her fortune was to be entirely in my power. There remained only one bar to our happiness. I was very young, and she was not sufficiently acquainted with my character. In order to try one another, she proposed to me to pass some days together, *tête-a-tête*, in the country. "A fortnight's solitude and liberty," said she, "will give us a truer idea of each other, than two years at Paris." I gave into the snare,

and she managed so well, that I forgot my resolution. How frail is man, and how little certain of himself! Having taken up the part of a husband, I was obliged to maintain it, and gave her the best opinion of me that I possibly could; but in a short time she thought she perceived that my love abated. It was in vain that I protested it was the same; she told me that she was not to be deceived with empty words, and that she plainly saw the change in me. In short, this morning I received my discharge in form from under her own hands. It runs in these words:

'The slender trial which I have made of your sentiments is sufficient. Begone, Sir, whenever you please, I would have a husband whose attentions should never relax: who loves me always, and always the same.'

"Are you satisfied? There is my adventure. You see it is quite of a different nature than that you attributed to me. I have been carried off as well as your Lauretta; Heaven grant that they have not done by her as they did by me! But now you are undeceived with respect to me, have you no other suspicion?"—"I am lost in them," said Luzy, "forgive my sorrow, my despair, my love, the step which I have just taken."—"Pshaw!" replied Soligny, "nothing was more just. If I had taken away your mistress, I must have given you satisfaction. There is nothing in it; so much the better: and so we are good friends. Will you breakfast with me?"—"I would die."—"That would be going rather too far. Preserve that remedy for more serious disgraces. Lauretta is a pretty girl, though a little knavish baggage: en-

deavour to see her again; but if you cannot get her, take another, and the sooner the better."

While Luzy remained inconsolable, and was scattering his money with a liberal hand, in order to discover some traces of Lauretta, she was at her father's, lamenting her error, or rather her lover.

Bazil had given out in the village, that he had not been able to live without his daughter, and that he had been to fetch her home. They found her still improved. Her graces were now blown; and that which is called the air of Paris had given her new charms, even in the eyes of the villagers. The ardour of the youths who had sought her was renewed, and became still more lively; but her father refused them all. "You shall never marry in my lifetime," said he, "I would not impose upon any one. Work and lament with me. I have just sent back to your unworthy lover all his presents. We owe him nothing now except our shame."

Lauretta, humble and submissive, obeyed her father without complaining, and without daring to raise her eyes towards him. It was to her an incredible difficulty to resume the habitude of indigence and labour. Her feet grown tender were wounded; her delicate hands were made sore; but these were slight evils. "The pains of the body are nothing," said she, groaning, "those of the soul are much more grievous."

Though Luzy was perpetually present to her, and her heart was not able to detach itself from him, she had no longer either the hope or desire of returning to him. She knew what bitterness her going astray had diffused over the life of her un-

happy father; and though she had been at liberty to quit him again, she would not have consented to it. But the image of the grief in which she had left her lover, pursued her, and was her torment. The right he had to accuse her, of perfidy and ingratitude, was a fresh cause of anguish.—"If I could but write to him! But I have neither the liberty nor the means. Not content with obliging me to abandon him, they would have me forget him, I shall sooner forget myself; and it is as impossible for me to hate him as to forget him. If he was culpable, his love was the cause, and I cannot punish him for it. In all that he did he meant only my happiness and my father's. He deceived himself, he led me astray; but at his age one thinks only of love. Yes, I owe to him, I owe it to myself, to clear up my conduct; and in that point alone my father shall not be obeyed." The difficulty now was only to procure the means of writing: but her father, without intending it, had spared her the trouble.

One evening Luzy, retiring more afflicted than ever, received an anonymous packet. The hand in which the direction was written was unknown to him; but the post-mark told him enough. He opens it with precipitation; he discovers the purse which he had given Bazil, with the fifty louis which he had left in it, and two like sums which he had sent to him. "I see the whole affair," said he; "I have been discovered. The father in indignation sends me back my presents. Haughty and severe, as I perceived him. As soon as he knew where his daughter was, he came to fetch her, and forced her to follow him." That

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LAURETTA.

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moment he assembles such of his domestics as attended Lauretta. He examines them; he asks if any one among them had not seen with her a countryman, whom he describes to them. One of them actually remembers, that the very day that she went away, a man exactly like the person he describes got up to the boot of Lauretta's coach, and spoke to her for a moment. "Come quickly," cried Luzy, "put post-horses to my chaise!"

The second night, being arrived at some leagues from Coulange, he causes the servant who attended him to disguise himself like a peasant, sends him to get information, and in the meanwhile endeavours to take rest. Alas, there is none for a soul of a lover in so violent a situation! He counts the minutes from the departure of his emissary to his return.

"Sir," said the servant, "good news! Lauretta is at Coulange, at her father's."——"I breathe again!"——"They talk even of marrying her."—"Of marrying her! I must see her."—"You will find her in the vineyard: she works there all day."—"Just Heaven, what hardship! Come, I will lie concealed; and you, under that disguise, shall watch the moment when she is alone. Let us not lose an instant. Away!"

Luzy's emissary had told him truth. A rich person in his situation had offered himself as a match for Lauretta; and the minister had sent to Bazil to persuade him to accept it.

In the mean time, Lauretta toiled in the vineyard, and thought of the unhappy Luzy. Luzy arrives, and perceives her at a distance: he advances with precaution, sees her alone, runs up, throws himself before her, and stretches out his

arms. At the noise which he made across the vine-leaves, she raises her head, and turns her eyes. "My God!" cried she. Surprize and joy took from her the use of her voice. She was in his arms, all trembling, without having been able to mention his name. "Ah Luzy!" said she, at last, "is it you? This is what I asked of Heaven. I am innocent in your eyes, that is enough: I will endure the rest. Adieu, Luzy, adieu for ever! Be gone; and lament your Lauretta. She reproaches you with nothing. You will be dear to her to her last breath."——"I!" cried he, locking her in his arms, as if they were about to tear her from him again: "I quit you! Thou half of myself, I live without thee! far from thee! No, there is not that power on earth that shall separate us."—"There is one which is sacred to me; the will of my father. Ah, my lost friend! if you had known the profound grief into which my flight plunged him, sensible and good as you are, you would have restored me to his tears. To take me away from him a second time, or to plunge a dagger into his bosom, would be to me the same thing. You know me too well to require it of me; you are too humane to wish it yourself. Cast away a hope which I have lost. Adieu! Heaven grant that I may expiate my fault! But I can scarce reproach myself for it. Adieu, I say! my father is coming: it would be dreadful that he should find us together."—"It is what I would have," said Luzy: "I wait for him."—"Ah! you are now going to redouble my sorrows."

At that instant Bazil arrives; and Luzy, advancing some paces to meet him, throws himself at his feet. "Who are you? what do you want?"

said Bazil, astonished at first. But as soon as he had fixed his eyes on him, "Wretch," cried he, drawing back, "be gone, take yourself away from my sight!"—"No, I shall die at your feet, if you will not vouchsafe to hear me."—"After having ruined, dishonoured the daughter, dare you present yourself to the father!"—"I am to blame, I confess, and here are the means to punish me," said he, presenting his sword. "But if you will hear me, I hope that you will have compassion on me."—"Ah!" said Bazil, looking at the sword, "if I were as base, as cruel as you—See," said he to his daughter, "how groveling is vice, and how great the shame of it; since it obliges a man to crouch at the feet of his fellow-creature, and to sustain his contempt."—"If I were only vicious," replied Luzy haughtily, "far from imploring you, I should brave you. Attribute my humiliation only to that which is the most honest, and most noble cause in nature: to love, to virtue itself, to the desire which I have of expiating a fault, excusable, perhaps, and with which I reproach myself so cruelly, only because I have a good heart." Then, with all the eloquence of sentiment, he endeavoured to justify himself, attributing the whole to the warmth of youth, and the intoxication of passion.

"The world is very happy," replied Bazil, "that your passion has not been that of money! You would have been a Cartouch." Luzy chafed at this discourse. "Yes, a Cartouch. And why not? Will you have the meanness to think that innocence and honour are of less value than riches and life? Have you not availed yourself of the weakness, the infirmity of this unhappy girl, in

order to rob her of these two treasures? And me, her father, do you think you have done me a less injury than if you had murdered me? A Cartouch is broken on the wheel, because he steals riches, with which we may dispense; but for you, who have taken from us what a well educated girl, what a virtuous father cannot lose without dying, what have you merited? They call you noble, and you believe yourself so. These are the marks of that nobility of which you are so vain. At a time of distress, when the most wicked of mankind would have had pity on me, you accost me, you pretend to pity me, and you say in your heart, 'There, now, is a wretch who has no other consolation in the world but his daughter: she is the only blessing Heaven has left him; and to-morrow I will carry her away from him.' Yes, barbarian! yes, villain! this is what passed in your soul. And I, poor, credulous fool! I admired you, loaded you with blessings, and prayed Heaven to accomplish all your wishes; while all your wishes were to seduce my daughter! What do I say, wretch as I am! I delivered her up to you, I engaged her to run after you, in truth, to restore to you that gold, that poison, with which you thought to corrupt me: it seemed as if Heaven had warned me that it was a destructive and treacherous gift; I resisted the impulse, and forced myself to believe you compassionate and generous; you were only perfidious and unpitying; and the hand which I would have kissed, which I would have watered with my tears, was preparing to pluck out my heart. "Behold," continued he, baring his bosom, and shewing his scars, "behold what a man you have dishonoured! I have shed, for my country,

more blood than you have in all your veins: and you, Sir, what are your exploits? Distressing a father, and debauching his daughter! empoisoning my days and her's! See there the unhappy victim of your seduction: see her there, steeping in her tears her daily bread. Brought up in the simplicity of an innocent and laborious life, she loved it; she now detests it: you have rendered insupportable labour and poverty to her! she has lost her joy with her innocence, and she can no longer lift up her eyes without blushing. But that which distracts me, that which I will never forgive you, is, that you have shut the heart of my daughter against me; you have extinguished the sentiments of nature in her soul; you have made the company of her father a torment to her: perhaps, alas,—I dare not speak it—perhaps, I am her aversion."

"Ah, my father!" cried Lauretta, who till then had remained in dejection and confusion; "Ah, my father! this is punishing me too much. I merit every thing except the reproach of having ceased to love you." On saying these words, she fell at his feet, and kissed the dust of them. Luzy prostrated himself before him, and in an excess of tenderness, "My father," said he, "pardon her, pardon me, embrace your children; and, if the ravisher of Lauretta be not too unworthy of the name of her husband, I conjure you to grant me that title."

This return would have softened a harder heart than Bazil's. "If there were," said he to Luzy, "any other way of restoring to me my honour, and to both of you your innocence, I would refuse this. But it is the only one; I accept it, and much

more for your sakes than for my own; for I neither expect, and will have nothing from you, and will die in cultivating my vineyard."

The love of Luzy and Lauretta was consecrated at the foot of the altar. Many people said that he had done a mean thing, and he agreed to it: "But it is not," said he, "that which they attribute to me. The shame was in doing the wrong, and not in repairing it."

There was no way of engaging Bazil to quit his humble habitation. After having tried every art to draw him to Paris, Madam de Luzy obtained permission of her husband to purchase an estate near Coulange, and the good father consented at last to go there and spend his old age.

Two hearts formed for virtue were ravished in having recovered it. That image of celestial pleasures, the agreement of love and innocence, left them nothing more to desire, but to see the fruits of so sweet an union. Heaven heard the wish of nature; and Bazil, before he died, embraced his grand-children.

FRIENDSHIP PUT TO THE TEST.

In one of those schools of morality to which the English youth go to study the duties of a man and a citizen, to enlighten the understanding and elevate the soul, Nelson and Blanford were distinguished by a friendship worthy of the first ages.

As it was founded on a perfect agreement of sentiments and principles, time only served to confirm it; and the more it was enlightened every day, the more intimate it every day became. But this friendship was to be put to a test, which it had some difficulty to support.

Their studies being finished, each of them took to that way of life to which nature invited him. Blanford, active, robust, and courageous, determined for the profession of arms, and for the sea-service. Voyages were his school. Inured to fatigues, instructed by dangers, he arrived, from rank to rank, to the command of a vessel.

Nelson, endowed with a manly eloquence, and of a genius wise and profound, was of the number of those deputies, of whom the national senate is composed; and in a short time he rendered himself famous there.

Thus each of them served his country, happy in the good which he did it: while Blanford sustained the shock of war, and of the elements, Nelson stood proof against favour and ambition. Examples of an heroic zeal, one would have thought that, jealous of each other, they contended for virtue and glory; or rather that, at two extremities of the world, the same spirit animated them both.

"Courage," said Nelson, in his letters to Blanford, "does honour to friendship, by preserving its country; live for the one, if it be possible, and die for the other, if there be occasion: a death, worthy of its tears, is more valuable than the longest life."—"Courage," said Blanford, in his letters to Nelson, "defends the rights of the people

and of liberty: a smile from one's country is of more value than the favour of kings."

Blanford enriched himself by doing his duty; he returned to London with the prizes he had taken on the Indian seas; but the most valuable part of his treasure was a young Indian, of a beauty that would have been uncommon in any climate. A Bramin, to whom Heaven had given this only daughter in reward for his virtues, had consigned her up, in his dying moments, to the hands of the generous Englishman.

Coraly had not yet attained her fifteenth year; her father made her his delight, and the tenderest object of his cares. The village in which he dwelt was taken and pillaged by the English. Solinzeb (that was the Bramin's name) presents himself on the threshold of his habitation. "Hold!" said he to the soldiers, who were come quite up to his humble sanctuary; "hold! Whoever you be, the God of nature, the beneficent God, is yours and mine: respect in me his minister."

These words, the sound of his voice, his venerable air, impress respect; but the fatal stroke is given, and the Bramin falls, mortally wounded, into the arms of his trembling daughter.

At that instant Blanford arrives. He comes to repress the fury of the soldiery. He cries out; he makes a passage through them; he sees the Bramin leaning on a young girl scarce able to support him, and who, tottering herself, bathes the old man with her tears. At this sight, nature, beauty, love, exercise all their influence on Blanford's soul. He easily discovers in Solinzeb the father of her who embraces him with such affectionate sorrow.

"Barbarians," said he to the soldiers, "be gone! Is it feebleness and innocence, old age and childhood, that you ought to attack?—Mortal, sacred to me," said he to the Bramin, "live, live; suffer me to repair the crime of those savages!" At these words he takes him into his arms, makes him lie down, examines the wound, and procures him all the assistance of art. Coraly, witness to the piety, the sensibility, of this stranger, thought she saw a god descended from Heaven to succour and comfort her father.

Blanford, who did not quit Solinzeb, endeavoured to soften the sorrow of his daughter; but she seemed to have a presage of her misfortune, and passed the nights and days in tears.

The Bramin perceiving his end approach—"I would fain," said he to Blanford, "go and die on the border of the Ganges, and purify myself in its waves."——"Father," replied the young Englishman to him, "it would be easy to give you that consolation, if all hope was lost, but wherefore add to the peril in which you are, that of so painful a removal? It is so far from hence to the Ganges!" And, then, (be not offended at my sincerity) it is the purity of the heart which the God of nature requires; and if you have observed the law which he has engraven on our souls, if you have done mankind all the good that you have been able, if you have avoided doing them ill, the God who loves them will love you."

"Thou art full of consolation," said the Bramin. "But thou, who reducest the duties of mankind to a plain piety and purity of manners, how can it be

that thou art at the head of those robbers who ravage India, and who bathe themselves in blood?"

"You have seen," said Blanford, "whether I authorize those ravages. Commerce draws us to India; and if men acted uprightly, that mutual exchange of conveniencies would be just and peaceable. The violence of your masters obliged us to take arms; and the transition is so quick from defence to attack, that at the first success, at the smallest advantage, the oppressed becomes the oppressor. War is a violent state, which it is not easy to soften. Alas! when man becomes unnatural, how can he be just? It is my duty here to protect the commerce of the English, to make my country honoured and respected. In the discharge of this duty, I spare, as far as possible, the effusion of blood and tears which war occasions: happy if the death of a good man, the death of Coraly's father, be one of those crimes and misfortunes which I am destined to save the world!" Thus spoke the virtuous Blanford, and embraced the old man.

"Thou wouldest persuade me," said Solinzeb, "that virtue is everywhere the same. But thou believest not in the god Vistnou and his nine metamorphoses: how can a good man refuse his assent to them?"——"Father," replied the Englishmen, "there are millions of people upon the earth who have never heard of Vistnou, or his adventures; for whom however, the sun rises every day, who breathe a pure air, who drink wholesome waters, and to whom the earth lavishes the fruits of the seasons. Would you believe it! There are among these people, as well as among

the children of Brachma, virtuous hearts, and good men. Equity, candour, uprightness, beneficence, and piety, are in veneration among them, and even among the wicked. O, my father! the dreams of the imagination differ according to climates; but the mind is everywhere the same, and the light which is its source, is as widely diffused as that of the sun."

"This stranger enlightens and astonishes me," said Solinzeb within himself: "all that my heart, my reason, the inward voice of nature, tell me to believe, he believes also; and of my worship he denies only that part which I have so much trouble myself not to deem absurd."—"Thou thinkest, then," said he to Blanford, "that a good man may die in peace?"—"Certainly?"—"I think so too, and I wait death as a gentle sleep. But when I am gone, what will become of my daughter? I see nothing in my country but slavery and desolation. My daughter had only me in the world, and in a few moments I shall be no more."—"Ah!" said the young Englishman, "if to her misfortune, death deprives her of a father, deign to confide her to my cares. I call Heaven to witness that her chastity, innocence, and liberty, shall be a deposit guarded by honour, and for ever inviolable."—"And in what principles shall she be brought up?"—"In yours if you please; in mine, if you will allow me; but at all events in that modesty and virtue which are everywhere the glory of a woman."—"Young man," replied the Bramin, with an august and threatening air, "God has just heard thy words; and the old man with whom thou now speakest will perhaps in an hour

be with him. "You have no need," said Blanford to him, "to make me perceive the sacredness of my promises; I am but a feeble mortal; but nothing under Heaven is more immoveable than the honesty of my heart." He spoke these words with such firmness, that the Bramin was penetrated with them. "Come, Coraly," said he to his daughter; "come embrace thy dying father: let him be, after me, thy guide and thy support." "There, my daughter," added he, "is the book of the law of thy forefathers; the *Veidam:* after having well meditated on it, suffer thyself to be instructed in the creed of this virtuous stranger, and chuse that of the two forms of worship which shall seem to thee most proper to make people virtuous."

The night following the Bramin expired. His daughter, who filled the air with her cries, was not able to detach herself from that livid and cold corpse, which she watered with her tears. At last sorrow exhausted her strength, and the attendants availed themselves of her fainting, to carry her away from the melancholy place.

Blanford, whom his duty recalled from Asia to Europe, carried thither with him his pupil; and though she was beautiful and easy to seduce, though he was young and strongly taken, he respected her innocence. During the voyage, he employed himself in teaching her a little English, in giving her an idea of the manners of Europe, and in disengaging her docile mind from the prejudices of her country.

Nelson was gone to meet his friend. They saw each other again with the most sensible joy. But

the first sight of Coraly struck and afflicted Nelson. "What do you do with this girl?" said he to Blanford in a severe tone. "Is she a captive, a slave? Have you carried her off from her parents? Have you made nature mourn?" Blanford related what had passed: he gave him so touching a portrait of the innocence, candour, and sensibility of the young Indian, that Nelson himself was moved at it. "This is my design," continued Blanford; "at my mother's, and under her eyes, she shall be instructed in our manners: I will form that simple and docile heart; and if she can be happy with me, I will marry her."—"I am easy, and acknowledge my friend."

The surprizes and different emotions of a young stranger, to whom every thing is new, have been often described; Coraly experienced them all. But her happy facility in seizing and comprehending every thing, even outstripped the pains which they took to instruct her. Genius, talents, and the graces, were in her innate gifts; they had only the trouble of developing them by a slight culture. She was near sixteen, and Blanford was going to marry her, when death deprived him of his mother. Coraly lamented her as if she had been her own; and the pains which she took to console Blanford, touched him sensibly. But during the mourning which retarded the nuptials, he had orders to embark on a new expedition. He went to see Nelson, and he confided to him, not the grief which he felt at quitting the young Indian, Nelson would have made him blush at that; but the grief of leaving her to herself, in the midst of a world which was unknown to her. "If my mother," said he,

" were still living, she would be her guide; but the ill fortune which pursues this poor girl has taken away from her her only support."—" Have you then forgot," said Nelson, " that I have a sister, and that my house is your own?"—" Ah, Nelson," replied Blanford, fixing his eyes on his, " if you knew what that charge is, which you would have me confide to you!" At these words Nelson smiled with disdain. " This uneasiness," said he, " is a fine compliment to us both. You dare not trust me with a woman?" Blanford in confusion blushed. " Pardon my weakness," said he: " it made me see danger where thy virtue finds none. I judged of your heart by my own: it is me whom my fear humbles. Let us say no more of it: I shall set out in peace, leaving the pledge of my love under the guard of friendship. But, my dear Nelson, if I die, let me request you to take my place."—" Yes, that of father, I promise you: ask no more."—" Enough: nothing farther detains me."

The adieus of Coraly and Blanford were mingled with tears: but Coraly's tears were not those of love. A lively gratitude, a respectful friendship, were the tenderest sentiments which Blanford had inspired her with. Her own sensibility was not known to her: the dangerous advantage of unfolding it was reserved for Nelson.

Blanford was handsomer than his friend; but his figure, like his temper, had a manly and austere fierceness in it. The sentiments which he had conceived for his pupil seemed to have given him rather the disposition of a father than of a lover: his attentions were without complaisance, his goodness

without charms, his concern tender but solemn, and his desire was that of rendering her happy with him, rather than of being happy with her.

Nelson, who was of a more engaging temper, had also more sweetness in his features and his language. His eyes, especially, expressed the eloquence of the soul. His look, the most touching in the world, seemed to penetrate to the bottom of people's hearts, and to procure him a secret correspondence with them. His voice thundered when there was a necessity to defend the interests of his country, her laws, her glory, her liberty; but in familiar conversation it was full of sensibility and charms. What rendered him still more engaging, was an air of modesty diffused over his whole person. This man, who at the head of his nation, would have made a tyrant tremble, was, in company, of a timid bashfulness; one single word of commendation made him blush.

Lady Juliet Albury, his sister, was a widow of great prudence, and an excellent heart; but of that kind of unhappy prudence which always anticipates misfortune, and accelerates instead of preventing it. It was she who was charged with consoling the young Indian. "I have lost my second father," said that amiable girl to her; "I have now only you and Nelson in the world. I will love you, I will obey you. My life and heart are yours." While she was yet embracing Juliet, Nelson arrives, and Coraly arises with a smiling and heavenly countenance, but still bedewed with tears.

"Well," said Nelson to his sister, "have you consoled her a little?"—"Yes, I am consoled, I have no farther complaint;" cried the young In-

dian, at the same time wiping her fine black eyes. Then making Nelson seat himself by the side of Juliet, and falling on her knees before them, she took them by their hands, put them one in the other, and pressing them tenderly in her own, "There is my mother," said she to Nelson, with a look which would have softened marble; "and you Nelson, what will you be to me?"—"I, Madam—your good friend."—"*My good friend!* that is charming! then I shall be your good friend too? Give me only that name."—"Yes, my good friend, my dear Coraly, your frankness delights me." "My God," said he to his sister, "what a beautiful girl! she will be the delight of your life."—"Yes, if she is not the misery of yours," replied the provident sister. Nelson smiled with disdain. "No," said he, "love never disputes in my soul the rights of sacred friendship. Be easy, sister, and employ yourself in peace, in the care of cultivating this beautiful innocent. Blanford will be enchanted with her, if, at his return, she is mistress of our language; for we may perceive in her ideas, shadows of sentiments which she is unhappy at not being able to express. Her eyes, her gestures, her features, every thing about her, proclaims ingenuous thoughts, which only want words to call them forth. This, sister, will be an amusement to you, and you will see her mind open like a flower."—"Yes, my brother, as a flower with a multitude of thorns."

Lady Albury constantly gave English lessons to her pupil, and the latter rendered them every day more interesting, by intermingling with them strokes of sentiment, of a vivacity and delicacy which belongs only to pure nature. It was a

triumph to her but to make discovery of a word which expressed any gentle affection of the soul. She made the most natural, the most touching applications of them. Nelson arrived; she flew to him, and repeated her lesson to him with a joy and simplicity, which yet he found only amusing. Juliet alone saw the danger, and wanted to prevent it.

She began, by making Coraly understand, that it was not polite to *thee* and *thou* it, and that she should say *you* at least, unless it were a brother and a sister. Coraly made her explain what politeness was, and asked what it was good for, if brother and sister had no need of it? They told her, that in the world it supplied the place of good humour. She concluded that it was useless to those who wish well to each other. They added that it displayed a desire of obliging and of pleasing. She replied, that this desire displayed itself without politeness: then giving for an example Juliet's little dog, which never quitted her, and caressed her perpetually, she asked if he was polite. Juliet entrenched herself behind the punctilios of decorum, which approved not, said she, the too free and joyous air of Coraly towards Nelson; and the latter, who had the idea of jealousy, because nature gives us the sensation of it, imagined within herself that the sister was jealous of the kindnesses which her brother did her. "No," said she to her, "I will afflict you no longer. I love you: I submit, and I will say *you* to Nelson."

He was surprized at this change in Coraly's language, and complained of it to Juliet. "The *you*," said he, "displeases me in her mouth: it agrees not with her simplicity."—"It displeases me too,"

replied the Indian: "it has something rebuffing and severe; whereas the *thou* is so soft! so intimate! so attracting!"—"Do you hear, sister; she begins to understand the language."—"Ha! it is not that which makes me uneasy: with a soul like her's, we express ourselves but too well."—"Explain to me," said Coraly to Nelson, "whence can arise the ridiculous custom of saying *you*, in speaking to a single person!"—"It arises, child, from the pride and weakness of man: he perceives that he is insignificant, being but one; he endeavours to double himself, to multiply himself in idea."—"Yes, I comprehend that folly; but thou, Nelson, thou art not vain enough."—"Again!" interrupted Juliet with a severe tone. "Hey! what, brother, are you going to chide her! Come, Coraly, come to me."—"I forbid her."—"How cruel you are. Is she then in danger with me? Do you suspect me of laying snares for her? Ah! leave her that pure nature; leave her the amiable candour of her country and age. Wherefore tarnish in her that flower of innocence, more precious than virtue itself, and which our factitious manners have so much difficulty to supply? It seems to me that nature is afflicted when the idea of evil penetrates into the soul. Alas! it is a venomous plant, which grows wild but too readily, without our giving ourselves the trouble of sowing it."—"What you say is very fine, to be sure: but since evil exists, we must avoid it; and in order to avoid it, we must know it."—"Ah! my poor little Coraly," said Nelson, "into what a world art thou transplanted! What manners are those, in which we are obliged to lose one half our innocence, in order to save the other!"

In proportion as the moral ideas increased in the young Indian's mind, she lost her gaiety and natural ingenuousness. Every new institution seemed to her a new fetter. "Another duty," said she, "another prohibition! My soul is enveloped as with a net: they are going soon to render it immoveable." That they made a crime of what was hurtful, Coraly comprehended without difficulty; but she could not imagine any harm in what did no harm to any body. "What greater happiness in living together," said she, "than to see one another with pleasure? and why conceal from ourselves so sweet an impression? Is not pleasure a blessing? Why then hide it from the person who occasions it. They pretend to feel it with those whom they do not love, and to feel none with those whom they do! Some enemy of truth devised these manners."

Reflections of this sort plunged her into melancholy; and when Juliet reproached her with it, "You know the cause of it," said she: "every thing that is contrary to nature must make her sorrowful; and in your manners every thing is contrary to nature." Coraly, in her little impatiences had something so soft and touching, that Lady Albury accused herself of afflicting her by too much rigour. Her manner of consoling her, and of restoring to her her good humour, was by employing her in little services, and by commanding her as her child. The pleasure of thinking that she was useful, flattered her sensibly; she foresaw the instant, in order to seize it; but the same attentions she paid to Juliet, she wanted to pay to Nelson, and they distressed her by mode-

rating her zeal. "The good offices of servitude," said she, "are low and vile, because they are not voluntary; but from the moment that they are free, there is no longer shame, and friendship ennobles them. Fear not, my good friend, that I shall suffer myself to be abased. Though very young before I quitted India, I knew the dignity of the tribe in which I was born: and when your fine ladies and young lords come to examine me with such familiar curiosity, their disdain only elevates my soul, and I perceive that I am well worth them all. But with you and Nelson, who love me as your daughter, what can there be humiliating to me?"

Nelson himself seemed sometimes confused at the trouble she took. "You are very vain, then," said she to him, "since you blush at having need of me! I am not so proud as you: serve me; I shall be flattered with it."

All these strokes of an ingenuous and sensible soul, made Lady Albury uneasy. "I tremble," said she to Nelson, when they were alone; "I tremble lest she should love you, and lest that love occasion her unhappiness." He took this hint for an injury to innocence. "See there now," said he, "how the abuse of words alters and displaces ideas. Coraly loves me, I know it; but she loves me as you do. Is there any thing more natural than to attach one's self to the person who does us good? Is it a fault in this girl, if the tender and lively expression of a sentiment so just, and so laudable, is profaned in our manners? Whatever criminality we affix to it, has it ever come into her thought?—"No, brother, you do not understand me. Nothing more innocent than her love for you;

but—" "But, sister, why suppose, why want it to be love? It is true and pure friendship for me, which she has for you likewise."—"You persuade yourself, Nelson, that it is the same sentiment; will you make trial of it? Let us have the appearance of separating, and reducing her to the choice of quitting the one or the other."—"See there, now: snares! wiles! Why impose them upon her? Why teach her to dissemble? Alas! does her soul practise disguise?"—"Yes, I begin to constrain her: she is grown afraid of me, ever since she has loved you?"—"And why have you inspired her with that fear? You would have us be ingenuous, and you make it dangerous to be so: you recommend truth, and if it escape, you make it a reproach. Ah! nature is not to blame; she would be frank if she had liberty; it is the art which is employed to constrain her that gives her a bias to falsity."—"These are very grave reflections for what is in fact a mere jest. For, after all, what does the whole amount to? To make Coraly uneasy for a moment, in order to see to which side her heart will incline: that is all."—"That is all: but that is a falsity; and which is worse, an afflicting one."—"Let us think no more of it: it answers no end to examine what we would not see."—"I, sister, I only want information to know how to behave. The manner alone has displeased me; but no matter: what do you require of me?"—"Silence and a serious air. Coraly comes; now you shall hear."

"What is the matter, now?" said Coraly, on coming up to them. "Nelson in one corner! Juliet in the other! Are you displeased?"—"We

have just taken," said Juliet to her, "a resolution which afflicts us; but there was a necessity of coming to it. We are no longer to live together; each of us is to have an house of our own; and we are agreed to leave you the choice."

At these words Coraly viewed Juliet with eyes immoveable, with sorrow and astonishment. "It is I," said she, "that am the cause of your wanting to quit Nelson. You are displeased that he loves me; you are jealous of the pity which a young orphan inspires him with. Alas! what will you not envy, if you envy pity, if you envy her who loves you, and who would give her life for you, the only valuable thing which is left her? You are unjust, my lady; yes, you are unjust. Your brother, in loving me, loves you not less; and if it were possible he would love you more, for my sentiments would pass into his soul, and I have nothing to inspire into him towards you, but complaisance and love."

"Juliet would fain have persuaded her, that she and Nelson parted good friends. "It is impossible," said she; "you made it your delight to live together; and since when is it become necessary that you should have two houses? People who love one another are never put to straits; distance pleases only those who hate each other. You, O Heaven! You to hate!" resumed she. "And who will love, if two hearts so good, so virtuous, do not. It is I, wretch as I am, that have brought trouble into the house of peace. I will banish myself from it; yes, I beseech you, send me back into my own country. I shall there find souls sensible to my misfortune and to my tears, who will not make it a crime in me to inspire a little pity."

"You forget," said Juliet to her, "that you are our charge."—"I am free," replied the young Indian, fiercely; "I may dispose of myself. What should I do here? With whom should I live? With what eyes would one of you regard me, after having deprived you of the other? Should I supply the place of a sister to Nelson? Should I console you for the loss of a brother? To occasion the unhappiness of what alone I love! No, you shall not part: my arms shall be a chain to you." Then running towards Nelson, and seizing him by the hand; "Come," said she to him, "swear to your sister that you love nothing in the world so well as her." Nelson, touched to the bottom of his soul, suffered himself to be led to his sister's feet; and Coraly throwing herself on Juliet's neck, "You," continued she, "if you are my mother, pardon him for having loved your child: his heart has enough for us both; and if you are any loser there, mine shall indemnify you for it."—"Ah! dangerous girl," said Juliet, "what sorrows will you soon occasion us!"—"Ah! sister," cried Nelson, who felt himself pressed by Coraly against Juliet's bosom, "have you the heart to afflict this poor girl?"

Coraly, enchanted at her triumph, kissed Juliet tenderly, at the very instant when Nelson put his face to his sister's. He felt his cheek touch the glowing cheek of Coraly, still wet with tears. He was surprized at the confusion and extasy which this accident occasioned him. "Happily, that," said he, "is only a simple emotion of the senses: it goes not to the soul. I am myself, and I am sure of myself." He dissembled however from

his sister, what he would fain have concealed from himself. He tenderly consoled Coraly, in confessing to her that all they had just said to her, to make her uneasy, was nothing more than a jest. "But what is no jest," added he, "is the counsel which I give you of distrusting, my dear Coraly, your own heart, which is too innocent, and too sensible. Nothing more charming than this affecting and tender disposition; but the best things very often become dangerous by their excess."

"Will you not quiet my uneasiness?" said Coraly to Juliet, as soon as Nelson was retired. "Though you tell me so, it is not natural to make sport of my sorrow. There is something serious in this pastime. I see you deeply moved; Nelson himself was seized with I know not what terror; I felt his hand tremble in mine; my eyes met his, and I saw there something so tender, and so sorrowful at the same time! He dreads my sensibility. He seems to be afraid that I should deliver myself up to it. My good friend, would it be any harm to love?"—"Yes, child, since we must tell you so; it is a misfortune both for you and for him. A woman; you may have seen it in the Indies as well as among us; a woman is destined for the society of one man alone; and by that union, solemnized and sacred, the pleasure of loving becomes a duty to her."—"I know it," said Coraly ingenuously: "that is what they call marriage."—"Yes, Coraly; and that friendship is laudable between two married persons; but till then it is forbidden."——"That is not reasonable," said the young Indian: "for before uniting one to the other, we must know whether we love

each other; and it is but in proportion to our love before hand, that we are sure of loving afterwards. For example, if Nelson loves me as I love him, it would be clear that each of us had met their counter-part."—"And do you not see in how many respects, and by how many compacts, we are slaves; and that you are not destined for Nelson?"—"I understand you," said Coraly looking down; "I am poor, and Nelson is rich; but my ill fortune at least does not forbid me to honour and cherish beneficent virtue. If a tree had sentiment, it would please itself in seeing the person who cultivates it repose himself under its shade, breathe the perfume of its flowers, and taste the sweetness of its fruits: I am that tree, cultivated by you two, and nature has given me a soul."

Juliet smiled at the comparison; but she soon gave her to understand, that nothing would be less decent, than what to her seemed so just. Coraly heard her, and blushed; from that time, to her gaiety, to her natural ingenuousness, succeeded an air the most reserved, and a conversation the most timid. What hurt her most in our manners, though she might have seen examples of it in India, was the excessive inequality of riches: but she had not yet been humiliated by it; she was so now for the first time.

"Madam," said she the next day to Juliet, "my life is spent in instructing myself in things which are rather superfluous. An industry which furnishes bread, would be much more useful to me. It is a resource which I beseech you to be pleased to procure me."—"You will never be reduced to that," said Lady Albury; "and not to mention us, it is not for nothing that Blanford has assumed

towards you the quality of father."—"Favours," replied Coraly, "bind us much oftener than we would choose. It is not disgraceful to receive them; but I clearly perceive that it is still more reputable to do without them." It was in vain that Juliet complained of this excess of delicacy. Coraly would not hear of amusements, or of useless studies, Amidst the labours which suit feeble hands, she chose those which required the most address and understanding: and, on applying herself to them, her only anxiety was to know whether they afforded a subsistence. "You will leave me then," said Juliet. "I would put myself," replied Coraly, "above all wants, except that of loving you, I would have it in my power to rid you of me, if I am any obstacle to your happiness; but if I can contribute to it, entertain no fear of my removing myself. I am useless, and yet I am dear to you; that disinterestedness is an example which I think myself worthy of imitating.

Nelson knew not what to think of Coraly's application to a labour merely mechanical, and of the disgust which had seized her for matters of pure entertainment. He saw with the same surprize, the modest simplicity which she had assumed in her dress; he asked her the reason. "I am trying what it is to be poor," replied she with a smile; and casting her eyes downwards, bedewed them with her tears. These words and involuntary tears touched him to the soul. "O Heaven!" said he, "can my sister have made her afraid of seeing herself poor and desolate!" As soon as he was alone with Juliet, he pressed her to clear up the matter to him.

"Alas!" said he, after having heard her, "what cruel pains you take to poison her life and mine! Though you were less certain of her innocence, are you not persuaded of my honour?"—"Ah, Nelson, it is not the crime, it is the misfortune which terrifies me. You see with what dangerous security she delivers herself up to the pleasure of seeing you; how she attaches herself insensibly to you; how Nature leads her, without her knowledge, into the snare. Ah, brother, at your age and her's, the name of friendship is but a veil. And why can I not leave you both under the illusion! No, Nelson, your duty is dearer to me than your ease. Coraly is destined for your friend; he himself has confided her to you; and, without intending it, you take her from him." "I, sister! what is it you dare to warn me of?"—"Of what you ought to shun. I would have her at the same time that she loves you, consent to give herself to Blanford; I would have him flatter himself with being loved by her, and be happy with her; but will she be happy with him? Were you sensible only of pity, of which she is so worthy, what sorrow would you not feel at having troubled, perhaps for ever, the repose of this unfortunate young creature? But it would be a prodigy to see her consume with love, and you do nothing more than pity her. You will love her—Will, do I say? Ah, Nelson! Heaven grant that you do not already!"—"Yes, sister, it is time to take whatever resolution you please. I only beg of you to spare the sensibility of that innocent soul, and not afflict her too much."—"Your absence will afflict her without doubt; yet that alone can cure her. This is the time of the year for the country: I was to

follow you there, and to bring Coraly; do you go alone, we will remain at London. Write however to Blanford, that we have occasion for his return."

From the moment the Indian saw that Nelson left her at London with Juliet, she thought herself cast into a desert, and abandoned by all nature. But as she had learned to be ashamed, and of course to dissemble, she pretended, as an excuse for her sorrow, the blame she took to herself for having separated them from each other. "You was to have followed him," said she to Lady Albury; "it is I that keep you here. Ah, wretch that I am! leave me alone, abandon me!" And in saying these words she wept bitterly. The more Juliet tried to divert her, the more she encreased her sorrows. All the objects which surrounded her, served only just to touch her senses; one idea alone possessed her soul. There was a necessity for a kind of violence to draw her from it; but the instant they left her to herself, it seemed as if one saw her thought fly back again to the object which she had been made to quit. If the name of Nelson was pronounced before her, a deep blush overspread her visage, her bosom heaved, her lips trembled, her whole body was seized with a sensible shivering. Juliet surprized her in a walk, tracing out on the sand, from place to place, the letters of that dear name. Nelson's picture decorated Juliet's apartment; Coraly's eyes never failed to fix themselves upon it, as soon as they were free: it was in vain she wanted to turn them aside; they soon returned there again, as it were of themselves, and by one of those emotions, in which the soul is accomplice, and not confidante.

The gloominess into which she was plunged dispersed at this sight, her work fell out of her hands, and the utmost tenderness of sorrow and love animated her beauty.

Lady Albury thought it her duty to remove this feeble image. This was to Coraly the most distressful misfortune. Her despair now broke all bounds. "Cruel friend," said she to Juliet, "you delight in afflicting me. You would have all my life be only sorrow and bitterness. If any thing softens my troubles, you cruelly take it from me. Not content to banish from me the man I love, his very shadow has too many charms for me; you envy me the pleasure, the feeble pleasure of seeing it."—"Ah, unhappy girl! what would you?"—"Love, adore him! live for him, while he shall live for another. I hope nothing, I ask nothing. My hands are sufficient to enable me to live, my heart is sufficient to enable me to love. I am troublesome to you, perhaps odious; remove me from you, and leave me only that image wherein his soul breathes, or wherein I think at least I see it breathe. I will see it, I will speak to it; I will persuade myself that it sees my tears flow, that it hears my sighs, and that it is touched by them."—"And wherefore, my dear Coraly, nourish this cruel flame which devours you? I afflict you, but it is for your good and Nelson's peace. Would you render him unhappy? He will be so if he knows that you love him; and still more so if he loves you. You are not in a condition to hear my reasons; but this inclination which we think so sweet, would be the poison of his life. Have pity, my dear child, of your friend, and my brother: spare him the remorse, the com-

plaints, which would bring him to his grave." Coraly trembled at this discourse. She pressed Lady Albury to tell her how Nelson's love for her could be so fatal to him. "To explain myself farther," said Juliet, "would be to render odious to you, what you ought for ever to cherish. But the most sacred of all duties forbids him the hope of being yours."

How is it possible to express the distress into which Coraly's soul was plunged! "What manners! what a country!" said she, "wherein one cannot dispose of one's self; wherein the first of all blessings, mutual love, is a terrible evil! I must tremble then, at seeing Nelson again! I must tremble at pleasing him! At pleasing him! Alas! I would give my life to be one moment, in his eyes, as amiable as he is in mine. Let me banish myself from this fatal shore, where it is made a misfortune to be loved."

Coraly heard, every day, of vessels sailing for her native country. She resolved to embark, without taking leave of Juliet. Only one evening, on going to bed, Juliet perceived that in kissing her hand, her lips pressed her more tenderly than usual, and that some profound sighs escaped her. "She leaves me more moved than ever before," said Juliet, alarmed. "Her eyes are fixed on mine with the most lively expression of tenderness and sorrow. What passes in her soul?" This uneasiness disturbed her the whole night, and next morning she sent to know if Coraly was not yet up. They told her that she was gone out alone, and in a plain dress, and that she had taken the way to the water-side. Lady Albury gets up in distress, and orders them to go in pursuit of the Indian.

They find her on board a vessel, begging her passage, environed by sailors, whom her beauty, her grace, her youth, the sound of her voice, and, above all, the native simplicity of her request, ravished with surprize and admiration. She had nothing with her but bare necessaries. Every thing they had given her which was valuable, she had left behind, excepting a little heart of crystal, which she had received from Nelson.

At the name of Lady Albury, she submitted without resistance; and suffered herself to be conveyed home. She appeared before her a little confused at her elopement; but to her reproaches she answered, that she was unhappy and free. "What, my dear Coraly, do you see nothing here but unhappiness?"—"If I saw here only my own," said she, "I should never leave you. It is Nelson's unhappiness that frights me, and it is for his peace that I would fly."

Juliet knew not what to reply: she durst not talk to her of the rights which Blanford had acquired over her: this would have been to make her hate him, as the cause of her unhappiness. She chose rather to lessen her fears. "I could not conceal from you," said she to her, "all the danger of a fruitless love; but the evil is not without remedy. Six months of absence, reason, friendship, how can we tell? Another object, perhaps ——." The Indian interrupted her. "Say death; there is my only remedy. What! will reason cure me of loving the most accomplished, the most worthy of men? Will six months of absence give me a soul that loves him not? Does time change nature? Friendship will pity me;

but will it cure me? Another object! You do not think so. You do not do me that injustice. There are not two Nelsons in the world; but though there were a thousand, I have but one heart; that is given away. It is, you say, a fatal gift: that I do not comprehend; but if it be so, suffer me to banish myself from Nelson, to hide from him my person and my tears. He is not insensible, he would be moved at it: and if it be a misfortune to him to love me, pity might lead him to it. Alas! who can, with indifference, see himself cherished as a father, revered as a god? Who can see himself loved, as I love him, and not love in his turn?—"You will not expose him to that danger," replied Juliet; "you will conceal your weakness from him, and you will triumph over it. No, Coraly, it is not the strength that is wanting to you, but the courage of virtue."—"Alas! I have courage against misfortune; but is there any against love? And what virtue would you have me oppose to him? They all act in concert with him. No, my lady, you talk to no purpose: you throw clouds over my understanding; you shed not the least light on it. Let me see and hear Nelson: he shall decide upon my life."

Lady Albury, in the most cruel perplexity, seeing the unhappy Coraly withering and pining in tears, and begging to be suffered to depart, resolved to write to Nelson, that he might come and dissuade the poor girl from her design of returning to India, and preserve her from that disgust of life which daily consumed her. But Nelson himself was not less to be pitied. Scarce had he quitted Coraly, but he perceived the danger of seeing

her, by the repugnance which he had to leave her. All that had appeared only play to him with her, became serious in being deprived of her. In the silence of solitude he had interrogated his soul: he had found there friendship languishing, zeal for the public good weakened, nay, almost extinguished, and Love alone ruling there, with that sweet and terrible sway which he exercises over good hearts. He perceived with horror, that his very reason had suffered itself to be seduced. The rights of Blanford were no longer so sacred; and the involuntary crime of depriving him of Coraly's heart was at least very excusable; after all, the Indian was free, and Blanford himself would not have wished to impose it on her as a duty to be his. "Ah, wretch!" cried Nelson, terrified at these ideas, "whither does a blind passion lead me astray! The poison of vice gains upon me: my heart is already corrupted. Is it for me to examine whether the charge, which is committed to me, belongs to the person who commits it? And am I made the judge, to whom it belongs, when I have promised to keep it? The Indian is free, but am I so? Should I doubt the rights of Blanford, if it were not in order to usurp them? My crime was, at first, involuntary; but it is no longer so, the moment I consent to it. I justify perjury! I think a faithless friend excusable! Who would have told thee, Nelson, who would have told thee, that on embracing the virtuous Blanford, thou shouldest call in doubt whether it were permitted thee to ravish from him the woman who is to be his wife, and whom he delivered up to thy trust? To what a degree does Love debase a man; and what a

strange revolution its intoxication makes in a heart! Ah! let him rend mine if he will; he shall not make it either perfidious or base; and if my reason abandon me, my conscience at least shall not betray me. Its light is incorruptible; the cloud of passions cannot obscure it: there is my guide; and friendship, honour, and fidelity, have still some support."

In the mean time Coraly's image pursued him perpetually. If he had only seen her with all her charms, arrayed in simple beauty, bearing on her countenance the serenity of innocence, the smile of candour on her lips, the fire of desire in her eyes, and in all the graces of her person the attracting air of voluptuousness, he would have found in his principles, in the severity of his manners, sufficient force to withstand seduction; but he thought he saw that amiable girl, as sensible as himself, more feeble, with no other defence than a prudence which was not her own, innocently abandoning herself to an inclination which would be her unhappiness; and the pity which she inspired him with, served as fuel to his love. Nelson blamed himself for loving Coraly, but forgave himself for pitying her. Sensible of the evils which he was on the point of being the cause of, he could not paint to himself her tears, without thinking of the fine eyes which were to shed them, and the heaving bosom which they would bedew: thus the resolution of forgetting her rendered her still dearer to him. He attached himself to her by renouncing her: but in proportion as he perceived himself weaker, he became more courageous. "Let me give over," said he, "the

thoughts of a cure: I exhaust myself in fruitless efforts. It is a fit which I must suffer to go off. I burn, I languish, I die; but all that is mere suffering, and I am answerable to nobody but myself for what passes within. Provided nothing escape me from without that discovers my passion, my friend has no reason to complain. It is only a misfortune to be weak: and I have the courage to be unhappy."

It was in this resolution of dying, rather than betraying his friendship, that he received the letter from his sister. He read it with emotion, and an extasy that was inexpressible. "O sweet and tender victim," said he, "thou groanest, thou wouldest sacrifice thyself to my repose, and to my duty! Pardon! Heaven is my witness, that I feel, more strongly than thyself, all the pangs which I occasion thee. Oh, may my friend, thy husband, soon arrive, and wipe away thy precious tears! He will love thee as I love thee; he will make his own happiness thine. However, I must see her, in order to detain and console her. Why should I see her? To what do I expose myself? Her touching graces, her sorrow, her love; her tears which I occasion to flow, and which it would be so sweet to dry up; those sighs, which a heart simple and artless suffers to escape; that language of nature, in which a soul the most sensible paints itself with so much candour: what trials to support? What will become of me; and what can I say to her! No matter: I must see her, and talk to her as a friend and a father. After seeing her, I only shall be the more uneasy, the more unhappy for it; but it is not my own peace that

is in question, it is her's; and, above all, the happiness of a friend depends on it; a friend for whom she must live. I am certain of subduing myself, and how painful soever the contest may be, it would be a weakness and shame to avoid it.

At Nelson's arrival, Coraly, trembling and confused, scarce dare present herself to him. She had wished his return with ardour; and at seeing him, a mortal chilness glided through her veins. She appeared as it were before a judge who was preparing, with one single word, to decide her fate.

What were Nelson's feelings, on seeing the roses of youth faded on her beautiful cheeks, and the fire of her eyes almost extinguished! "Come," said Juliet to her brother, "appease the mind of this poor girl, and cure her of her melancholy. She is eaten up with the vapours with me; she wants to return to India."

Nelson, speaking to her in a friendly manner, wanted to engage her, by gentle reproaches, to explain herself before his sister: but Coraly kept silence, and Juliet, perceiving that she was a restraint upon her, went away.

"What is the matter with you, Coraly? What have we done to you?" said Nelson. "What sorrow presses you?"—"Do not you know it? Must you not have seen that my joy and my sorrow can no longer have more than one cause? Cruel friend! I live only through you, and you fly me: you would have me die! But you would not have it so: they make you do it: they do more, they require of me to renounce you, and

to forget you. They fright me, they damp my very soul, and they oblige you to make me distracted. I ask of you but one favour," continued she, throwing herself at his knees; "it is to tell me whom I offend in loving you, what duty I betray, and what evil I occasion. Are there here laws so cruel, are there tyrants so rigorous, as to forbid me the most worthy use of my heart and my reason? Must we love nothing in the world? or, if I may love, can I make a better choice?"

"My dear Coraly," replied Nelson, "nothing is truer, nothing is more tender, than the friendship which attaches me to you. It would be impossible, it would be even unjust, that you should not be sensible of it."—"Ah! I revive, this is talking reason."—"But though it would be extremely agreeable to me to be what you hold dearest in the world, it is what I cannot pretend, neither ought I even to consent to it."—"Alas! now I don't understand you."—"When my friend confided you to my care, he was dear to you?"—"He is so still."—"You would have thought yourself happy to be his?"—"I believe it."—"You loved nothing so much as him in the world?"—"I did not know you."—"Blanford, your deliverer, the depository of your innocence, in loving you, has a right to be loved."—"His favours are always present to me: I cherish him as a second father."—"Very well: know that he has resolved to unite you to him, by a tie still more sweet and sacred than that of his favours. He has confided to me the half of himself, and at his return he aspires only to the happiness of being your husband."—"Ah," said Coraly, comforted; "this then is the obstacle which separates us?

Be easy, it is removed."—"How?"—"Never, never, I swear to you, will Coraly be the wife of Blanford!"—"It must be so."—"Impossible! Blanford himself will confess it."—"What! he who received you from the hand of a dying father, and who himself has acted as a father to you!"—"Under that sacred title I revere Blanford, but let him not require more."—"You have then resolved his unhappiness?"—"I have resolved to deceive nobody. If I were given to Blandford, and Nelson demanded my life of me, I would lay down my life for Nelson; I should be perjured to Blandford."—"What say you?"—"What I will dare to tell Blandford himself. And why should I dissemble it? Does love depend on myself?"—"Ah, how culpable you make me!"—"You, in what? in being amiable in my eyes? Aye, Heaven disposes of us. Heaven has given to Nelson those graces, those virtues which charm me; Heaven has given to me this soul, which it has made expressly for Nelson. If they knew how full it is of him, how impossible that it should love any thing but you, any thing like you! Let them never talk to me of living, if it be not for you that I live."—"And this is what distresses me. With what reproaches has not my friend a right to overwhelm me?"—"He! of what can he complain? What has he lost? What have you taken from him? I love Blandford as a tender father: I love Nelson as myself, and more than myself: these sentiments are not incompatible. If Blanford delivered me into your hands as a deposit which was his own, it is not you, it is he that is unjust."—"Alas! it is me, who oblige you to reclaim from him that treasure of which I

rob him: it would be his if it were not mine: and the keeper becomes the purloiner."—"No, my friend, be equitable. I was my own, I am yours. I alone could give myself away, and have given myself to you. By attributing to friendship rights which it has not, it is you that usurp them in its behalf, and you render yourself an accomplice of the violence which they do me."—"He, my friend, do you violence?"—"What signifies it to me whether he does it himself, or that you do it for him? Am I treated the less like a slave? One single interest occupies and touches you; but if another than your friend wanted to retain me captive, far from subscribing to it, would not you make it your glory to set me free? It is, then, only for the sake of friendship that you betray nature! What do I say? Nature! and Love, Nelson,—Love, has not that also its rights? Is there not some law among you in favour of sensible souls? Is it just and generous to overwhelm, to drive to despair, a fond female, and to tear, without pity, a heart whose only crime is loving you?"

Sobs interrupted her voice; and Nelson, who saw her choaked with them, had not even time to call his sister. He hastens to untie the ribbands which bound her bosom; and then all the charms of youth, in its flower, were unveiled to the eyes of this passionate lover. The terror with which he was seized, rendered him at first insensible of them; but when the Indian, resuming her spirits, and perceiving herself pressed in his arms, thrilled with love and transport, and when on opening her fine languishing eyes she sought the eyes of Nelson; "Heavenly powers," said he, "support

me! all my virtue abandons me. Live, my dear Coraly!"—"Would you that I should live, Nelson! would you then that I love you?"—"No, I should be perjured to friendship, I should be unworthy to see the light; unworthy of seeing my friend again. Alas! he foretold me this, and I vouchsafed not to believe him. I have presumed too much on my own heart. Have pity on it, Coraly, of that heart which you rend to pieces. Suffer me to fly you, and to subdue myself."—"Ah! you would have my death," said she to him, falling into a fit at his feet. Nelson, who thinks he sees what he loves expiring, rushes to embrace her, and restraining himself suddenly at the sight of Juliet, "My sister," said he, "assist her, it is for me to die!" On saying these words he withdraws.

"Where is he?" demanded Coraly, on opening her eyes. "What have I done to him? Why fly me? And you, Juliet, more cruel still, why recal me to life?" Her sorrow redoubled when she learned that Nelson was just gone; but reflection gave her a little hope and courage. The concern and tenderness which Nelson had not been able to conceal, the terror with which she had seen him seized, the tender words which had escaped him, and the violence which it was to him to subdue himself and withdraw, all persuaded her that she was beloved. "If it be true," said she, "I am happy; Blanford will return, I will confess the whole to him; he is too just and too generous to want to tyrannize over me." But this illusion was soon dissipated.

Nelson received in the country a letter from his friend, announcing his return. "I hope," said

he, at the end of his letter, "to see myself in three days united to all that I love. Pardon, my friend, if I associate to thee in my heart the amiable and tender Coraly. My soul was a long time solely devoted to thee; now she partakes of it. I have confided to thee the sweetest of my wishes, and I have seen friendship applaud love. I form my happiness both of one and the other; I make it my felicity to think that by thy cares, and those of thy sister, I shall see my dear pupil again; her mind ornamented with new acquirements, her soul enriched with new virtues, more amiable, if possible, and more disposed to love. It will be the purest bliss to me to possess her as a benefit conferred by you."

"Read this letter," writ Nelson to his sister, "and make Coraly read it. What a lesson for me! What a reproach to her!"

"It is over," said Coraly, after having read; "I shall never be Nelson's; but let him not ask me to be another's. The liberty of loving is a good which I am not able to renounce." This resolution supported her, and Nelson in his solitude was much more unhappy than she.

"By what fatality," said he, "is it that what forms the charm of nature and the delight of all hearts, the happiness of being loved, forms my torment? What say I? Of being loved? That is nothing; but to be loved of what I love! To touch on happiness! To have only to deliver myself up to it! Ah, all that I am able to do is to fly! inviolable and sacred friendship asks no more. In what a condition have I seen this poor girl! In what a condition did I abandon her! She may well say, that she is the slave of my

virtues. I sacrifice her as a victim, and I am generous at her expence. There are, then, virtues which wound nature; and to be honest, one is sometimes obliged to be unjust and cruel! Oh, my friend! mayest thou gather the fruit of the efforts which it costs me; enjoy the good which I resign to thee; and live happy from my misfortune. Yes, I wish that she may love thee; I wish it, Heaven is my witness; and the most sensible of all my pain is, that of doubting the success of my wishes."

It was impossible for Nature to support herself in a state so violent. Nelson, after long struggles, sought repose; alas! there was no more repose for him. His constancy was at last exhausted, and his discouraged soul fell into a mortal languor. The weakness of his reason, the inefficacy of his virtue, the image of a painful and sorrowful life, the void and the state of annihilation into which his soul would fall if it ceased to love Coraly, the evils without intermission which he was to suffer if he continued to love her; and, above all, the terrifying idea of seeing, of envying, of hating, perhaps a rival in his faithful friend; all rendered his life a torment to him, all urged him to shorten the course of it. Motives more strong restrained him. It was not a part of Nelson's principles, that a man, a citizen, might dispose of himself. He made it a law to himself to live, consoled in his misery if he could still be useful to the world, but consumed with heaviness and sorrow, and become as it were insensible to every thing.

The time appointed for Blanford's return approached. It was necessary that every thing should be so disposed as to conceal from him the

mischief which his absence had occasioned; and who should determine Coraly to conceal it, but Nelson? He returned therefore to London, but languishing, dejected to such a degree, as not to be known. The sight of him overwhelmed Juliet with grief, and what impression did it not make on the soul of Coraly! Nelson took upon him to re-encourage them; but that very effort only served to compleat his own dejection. The slow fever which consumed him redoubled; he was forced to give way to it; and this furnished occasion for a new contest between his sister and the young Indian. The latter would not quit Nelson's pillow. She urgently entreated them to accept of her care and attendance. They kept her out of the way from pity to herself, and for the sake of sparing him; but she tasted not the repose which they meant to procure her. Every moment of the night they found her wandering round the apartment of the diseased, or motionless on the threshold of his door, with tears in her eyes, her soul on her lips, her ear attentive to the slightest noises, every one of which congealed her with fear.

Nelson perceived that his sister suffered her to see him with regret. "Afflict her not," said he to her; "it is to no purpose; severity is no longer necessary. It is by gentleness and patience that we must endeavour at our cure."—"Coraly, my good friend," said he to her one day when they were alone with Juliet, "you would readily give something to restore my health, would not you?"—"O Heaven, I would give my life."—"You can cure me at least. Our prejudices are, perhaps, unjust, and our principles inhuman; but the ho-

nest man is a slave to them. I have been Blanford's friend from my infancy. He depends on me as on himself, and the chagrin of taking from him a heart of which he has made me the keeper, is every day digging my grave. You may see whether I exaggerate. I do not conceal from you the sources of the slow poison which consumes me. You alone can dry it up. I require it not: you shall be still free; but there is no other remedy for my disease. Blandford arrives. If he perceive your disinclination for him, if you refuse him that hand which but for me would have been granted him, be assured that I shall not survive his misfortune and my own remorse. Our embraces will be our adieus. Consult yourself, my dear child; and if you would that I live, reconcile me with myself, justify me towards my friend."—"Ah! live, and dispose of me!" said Coraly to him, forgetting herself; and these words, distressing to love, bore consolation to the bosom of friendship.

"But," resumed the Indian, after a long silence, "how can I give myself to him whom I do not love, with a heart full of him whom I do love?"—"My dear, in an honest soul, duty triumphs over every thing. By losing the hope of being mine, you will soon lose the thought. It will give you some pain, without doubt; but my life depends on it, and you will have the consolation of having saved it."—"That is every thing to me: I give myself up at that price. Sacrifice your victim: it will groan, but it will obey. But you, Nelson, you, who are truth itself, would you have me disguise my inclinations, and impose

thus on your friend? Will you instruct me in the art of dissembling?"—"No, Coraly, dissimulation is useless. I have not had the misfortune of extinguishing in you gratitude, esteem, and tender friendship; these sentiments are due to your benefactor, and they are sufficient for your husband; only display these towards him. As to that inclination which leans not towards him, you owe him the sacrifice of it, but not the confession. That which would hurt if it were known, ought to remain for ever concealed; and dangerous truth has silence for its refuge."

Juliet interrupted this scene too painful to both, by leading away Coraly, whom she employed every endearment and commendation to console. "It is thus," said the young Indian with a smile of sorrow, "that on the Ganges they flatter the grief of a widow, who is going to devote herself to the flames of her husband's funeral pile. They adorn her, they crown her with flowers, they stupify her with songs of praise. Alas! her sacrifice is soon finished; mine will be cruel and lasting. My good friend, I am not eighteen years of age! What tears have I yet to shed till the moment when my eyes shall shut themselves for ever!" This melancholy idea painted to Juliet a soul absorbed in sorrow. She employed herself no longer in consoling her, but in grieving along with her. Complaisance, persuasion, indulgent and feeling compassion, all that friendship has most delicate, was put in practice to no effect.

At last, they inform her that Blanford is landed; and Nelson, enfeebled and faint as he is, goes to receive and embrace him at the harbour. Blan-

ford, on seeing him, could not conceal his astonishment and his uneasiness. "Courage, man," said Nelson; "I have been very ill, but my health is returning. I see you again, and joy is a balm which will soon revive me. I am not the only one whose health has suffered by your absence. Your pupil is a little changed: the air of our climate may contribute to it. As to the rest, she has made a great progress: her understanding, her talents, have unfolded themselves; and if the kind of langour into which she has fallen vanishes, you will possess what is pretty uncommon, a woman in whom nature has left nothing wanting.

Blanford, therefore, was not surprised to find Coraly weak and languishing; but he was much affected at it. "It seems," said he, "as if Heaven wanted to moderate my joy, and to punish me for the impatience which my duty excited in me at a distance from you. I am now here again, free, and restored to love and friendship." The word *love* made Coraly tremble: Blanford perceived her concern. "My friend," said he to her, "ought to have prepared you for the confession which you have just heard."—"Yes, your goodness is well known to me; but can I approve the excess of it?"—"That is a language which favours of the politeness of Europe: join with me to forget it. Frank and tender, Coraly, I have seen the time when if I had said, 'Shall Hymen unite us?' you would have answered me without disguise, 'With all my heart!' or, possibly, 'I cannot consent to it.' Use the same freedom now. I love you, Coraly, but I love to make you happy:

your misfortune would be mine." Nelson, trembling, looked at Coraly, and durst not guess her answer. "I hesitate," said she to Blanford, "through a fear like yours. While I saw you only as a friend, a second father, I said to myself, 'He will be content with my veneration and affectionate regard; but if the name of husband mingle with titles already sacred, what have you not a right to expect? Have I wherewith to acquit me towards you?'—"Ah! that amiable modesty is worthy of adorning thy virtues. Yes, thou half of myself, your duties are fulfilled, if you return my affection. Thy image has followed me every where. My soul flew back towards thee across the depths which separated us: I have taught the name of Coraly to the echoes of another world.—Madam," said he to Juliet, "pardon me if I envy you the happiness of possessing her. It will soon be my turn to watch over a health that is so precious to me. I will leave you the care of Nelson's: it is a charge not less dear to me. Let us live happy, my friends: it is you who have made me know the value of life; and in exposing it, I have often experienced by what strong ties I was attached to you."

It was settled, that in less than a week Coraly should be married to Blanford. In the mean time she remained with Juliet, and Nelson never quitted her. But his courage was exhausted in supporting the young Indian's. To be perpetually constrained to suppress his own tears, to dry up those of a fond girl, who, sometimes distressed at his feet, sometimes fainting and falling into his arms, conjuring him to have pity on her, without

allowing one moment to his own weakness, and without ceasing to recal to his mind his cruel resolution; this trial appears above the strength of nature: accordingly, Nelson's virtue abandoned him every moment. "Leave me," said he to her, "unhappy girl! I am not a tyger, I have a feeling soul, and you distract it. Dispose of yourself, dispose of my life, but leave me to die faithful to my friend."—"And can I, at the hazard of your life, use my own will? Ah, Nelson! at least promise me to live; no longer for me, but for a sister who adores you."—"I should deceive you, Coraly. Not that I would make any attempt upon myself; but see the condition to which my grief has reduced me; see the effect of my remorse and shame anticipated: shall I be the less odious, less inexorable to myself, when the crime shall be accomplished?"—"Alas! you talk of a crime! Is it not one, then, to tyrannize over me?"—"You are free: I no longer require any thing; I know not even what are your duties; but I know too well my own, and I will not betray them."

It was thus their private conversations served only to distress them. But Blanford's presence was still more painful to them. He came every day to converse with them, not on the barren topic of love, but the care he took, that every thing in his house should breathe chearfulness and ease; that every thing there should forestall the desires of his wife, and contribute to her happiness. "If I die without children," said he, "the half of my wealth is her's, the other half is his who, after me, shall know how to please and console her for

having lost me. That, Nelson, is your place: there is no growing old in my profession: take my place when I shall be no more. I have not the odious pride of wanting my wife to continue faithful to my shade. Coraly is formed to embellish the world, and to enrich nature with the fruits of her fecundity."

It is more easy to conceive than describe the situation of our two lovers. Their concern and confusion were the same in both; but it was a kind of consolation to Nelson, to see Coraly in such worthy hands; whereas Blanford's favours and love were an additional torment to her. On losing Nelson, she would have preferred the desertion of all nature, to the cares, and favours, the love of all the world beside. It was decided, however, even with the consent of this unfortunate girl, that there was no longer time to hesitate, and that it was necessary she should submit to her fate.

She was led, then, as a victim to that house, which she had cherished as her first asylum, but which she now dreaded as her grave. Blanford received her there as a sovereign; and what she could not conceal of the violent state of her soul, he attributes to timidity, to the concern which, at her age, the approach of marriage inspires.

Nelson had summoned up all the strength of a stoical soul, in order to present himself at this festival with a serene countenance.

They read the settlement which Blanford had made. It was, from one end to the other, a monument of love, esteem, and beneficence. Tears flowed from every eye, even from Coraly's.

Blanford approaches respectfully, and stretching

out his hand to her; "Come," said he, "my best beloved, give to this pledge of your fidelity, to this title of the happiness of my life, the inviolable sanctity with which it is to be cloathed."

Coraly, on doing herself the utmost violence, had scarce strength to advance and put her hand to the pen. At the instant she would have signed, her eyes were covered with a mist; her whole body was seized with a sudden trembling; her knees bent under her, and she was on the point of falling, if Blanford had not supported her. Shocked, congealed with fear, he looks at Nelson, and sees him with the paleness of death on his countenance. Lady Albury had ran up to Coraly, in order to assist her. "O Heaven," cried Blanford, "what is it that I see! Sorrow, death surround me. What was I going to do? What have you concealed from me?"—"Ah, my friend, could it be possible!"—"See the light again, my dear Coraly, I am not cruel, I am not unjust; I wish only for your happiness!"

The women who surrounded Coraly, exerted themselves to revive her; and decency obliged Nelson and Blanford to keep at a distance. But Nelson remained immoveable, with his eyes fixed on the ground like a criminal. Blanford comes up to him, and clasps him in his arms, "I am no longer thy friend?" said he. "Art thou not still the half of myself? Open thy heart to me, and tell me what has passed. No, tell me nothing, I know all. This poor girl could not see thee, hear thee, and live with thee, without loving thee. She has sensibility, she has been touched with thy goodness and with thy virtues. Thou hast condemned her to silence; thou hast required of her

the most grievous sacrifice. Ah, Nelson! had it been accomplished, what a misfortune! Just Heaven would not permit it! Nature, to whom thou didst violence, has resumed her rights. Do not afflict thyself: it is a crime which she has spared thee. Yes, the devotion of Coraly was the crime of friendship."—"I confess," replied Nelson, throwing himself at his knees: "I have been the innocent cause of thy unhappiness, of my own, and that of this amiable girl; but I call fidelity, friendship, honour, to witness—"—"No oaths," interrupted Blanford; "they wrong us both. No, my friend," continued he, raising him, "thou wouldest not be in my arms, if I had been able to suspect thee of a shameful perfidy. What I foresaw is come to pass, but without thy consent. What I have just now seen is a proof of it, and that very proof is unnecessary: thy friend has no need of it."—"It is certain," replied Nelson, "that I have nothing to reproach myself, but my presumption and imprudence. But that is enough, and I shall be punished for it. Coraly will not be thine, but I will not be her's."—"Is it thus that you answer a generous friend?" replied Blanford to him in a firm and grave tone of voice. "Do you think yourself obliged to observe childish punctilios with me? Coraly shall not be mine, because she would not be happy with me. But an honest man for a husband, whom but for you she would have loved, is a loss to her, of which you are the cause, and which you must repair. The contract is drawn up, they shall change the names; but I insist that the articles remain. What I meant to give Coraly as a husband, I now give her as a father. Nelson, make me not blush, by

an humiliating refusal."—"I am confounded, and not surprised," said Nelson, "at this generosity which overpowers me. I must subscribe to it with confusion, and revere it in silence. If I knew not how well respect reconciles itself to friendship, I should no longer dare to call you my friend."

During the conversation Coraly had recovered, and again saw with terror the light which was restored to her. But what was her surprize, and the revolution which was suddenly wrought in her soul! "All is known, all is forgiven!" said Nelson, embracing her, "fall at the feet of our benefactor: from his hand I receive yours." Coraly would have been profuse in her acknowledgments. "You are a child," said Blanford to her. "You should have told me every thing. Let us talk no more of it; but let us never forget, that there are trials, to which virtue itself would do well not to expose herself."

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